

BRAVEHEARTS

HEMU

Born in the small town of Rewari, in present-day Haryana, Hemu, a grocer's son, had ambitions that took him beyond his world into the realm of politics, intrigue and war. An ambition that made him Emperor of Delhi.

Hemu's rise to power is a fascinating story. He relied entirely on his own intelligence and intuition. He had to contend with political scheming and treachery in the courts of Sher Shah Suri, Islam Shah and finally Adil Shah. With Humayun and then Akbar making a bid to regain the throne of Delhi, it was up to Hemu to defend it.

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- NARAYAN MURTHY, CHIEF MENTOR, INFOSYS



HEMU

BRILLIANT STRATEGIST, SHREWD STATESMAN

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HEMU



HEMU WAS BORN IN A SMALL TOWN CALLED REWARI.* AS HIS FATHER WAS A GROCER, HE WAS BROUGHT UP TO BE A SHOPKEEPER.



I WANT
200 SEERS OF
JOWAR.

WELCOME, SETHJI.
WHAT CAN I DO
FOR YOU?



HEMU, HAVE 200 SEERS
OF JOWAR SENT TO THE
SETHJI'S HOUSE.

FATHER HAS
NO HEAD FOR
BUSINESS. I'LL
HAVE TO TAKE
MATTERS INTO
MY OWN HANDS
OR DIE A MISER-
ABLE GROCER.



I'M SORRY, FATHER. OUR STOCK IS FINISHED.

DIDN'T WE RECEIVE FRESH SUPPLIES JUST TWO DAYS AGO?



WE DID. BUT A STRANGER CAME HERE YESTERDAY AND BOUGHT UP ALL OF IT.

YOU SHOULD HAVE KEPT SOME IN STOCK! I'LL BUY MY SUPPLIES ELSEWHERE IN FUTURE!



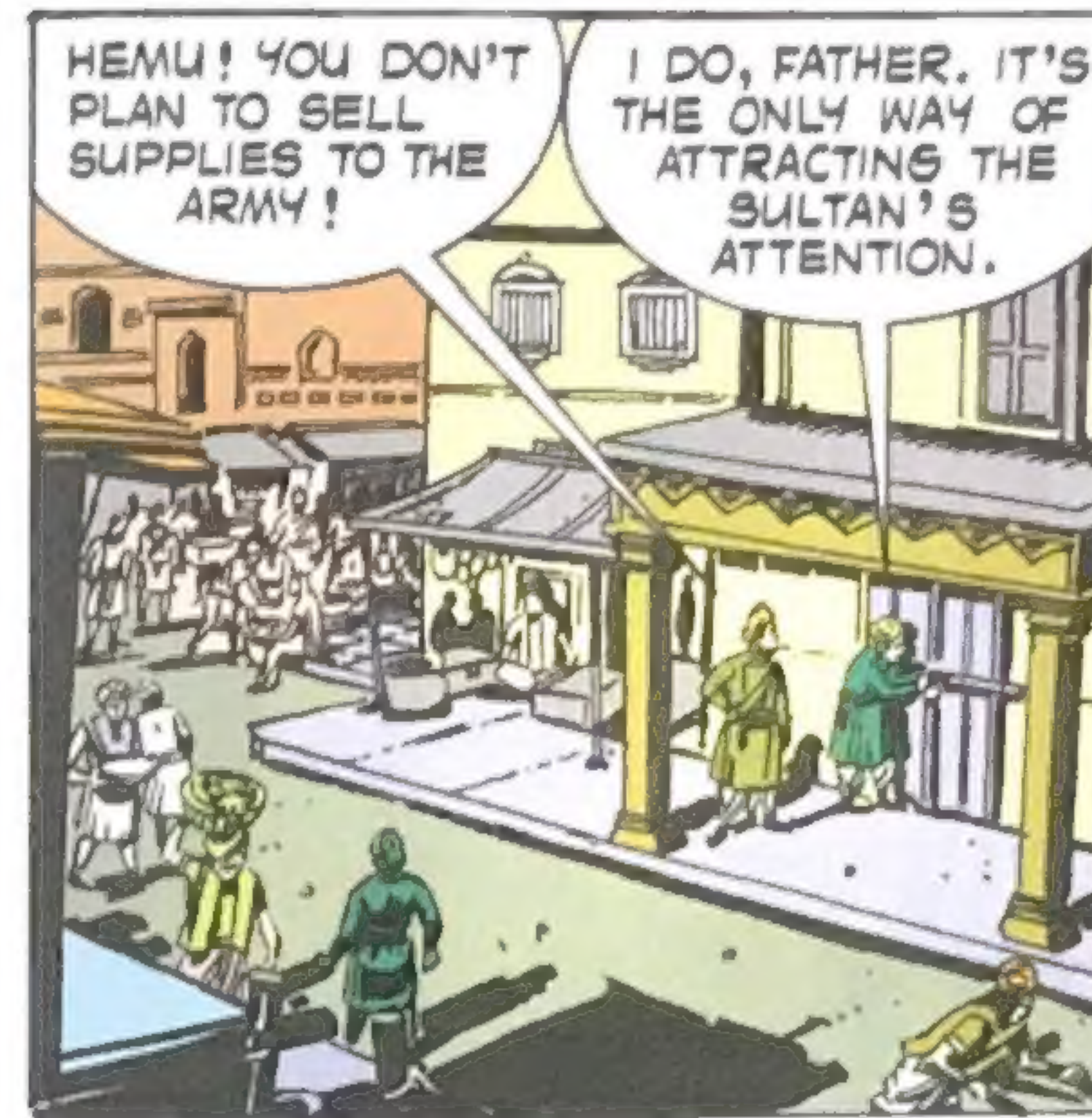
WE HAVE LOST ONE OF OUR RICHEST CUSTOMERS, HEMU.

DON'T WORRY, FATHER, I HAVE A BETTER CUSTOMER IN MIND—SULTAN ISLAM SHAH.



THE SULTAN HIMSELF?

YES. HIS FORCES WILL SOON BE HERE IN PURSUIT OF THE REBELS WHO SUPPORT HIS BROTHER.



HEMU! YOU DON'T PLAN TO SELL SUPPLIES TO THE ARMY!

I DO, FATHER. IT'S THE ONLY WAY OF ATTRACTING THE SULTAN'S ATTENTION.



THE SULTAN'S ATTENTION? WHATEVER FOR? YOU ARE A GROCER'S SON AND...

I DON'T PLAN TO REMAIN A GROCER FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.

HEMU HAD HIS WAY AND PATIENTLY WAITED FOR HIS CUSTOMER TO COME.



HEMU, I HEAR THE SULTAN HAS SENT REINFORCEMENTS TO FEROZEPORE* TO CRUSH THE REBELS.

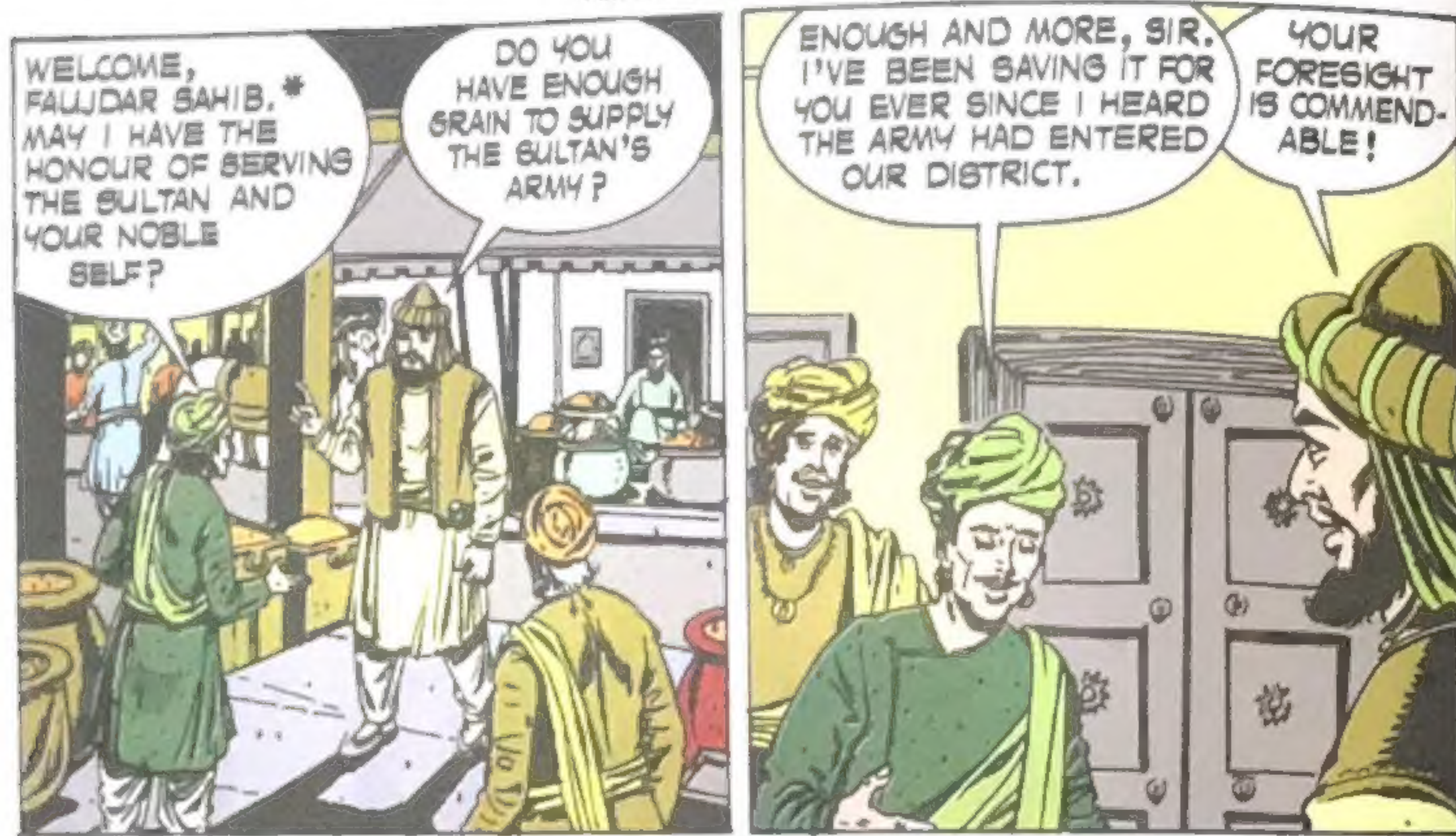
THAT'S GOOD NEWS! FEROZEPORE ISN'T FAR AWAY.

THEN ONE DAY—



AT LAST! THE CUSTOMER WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!

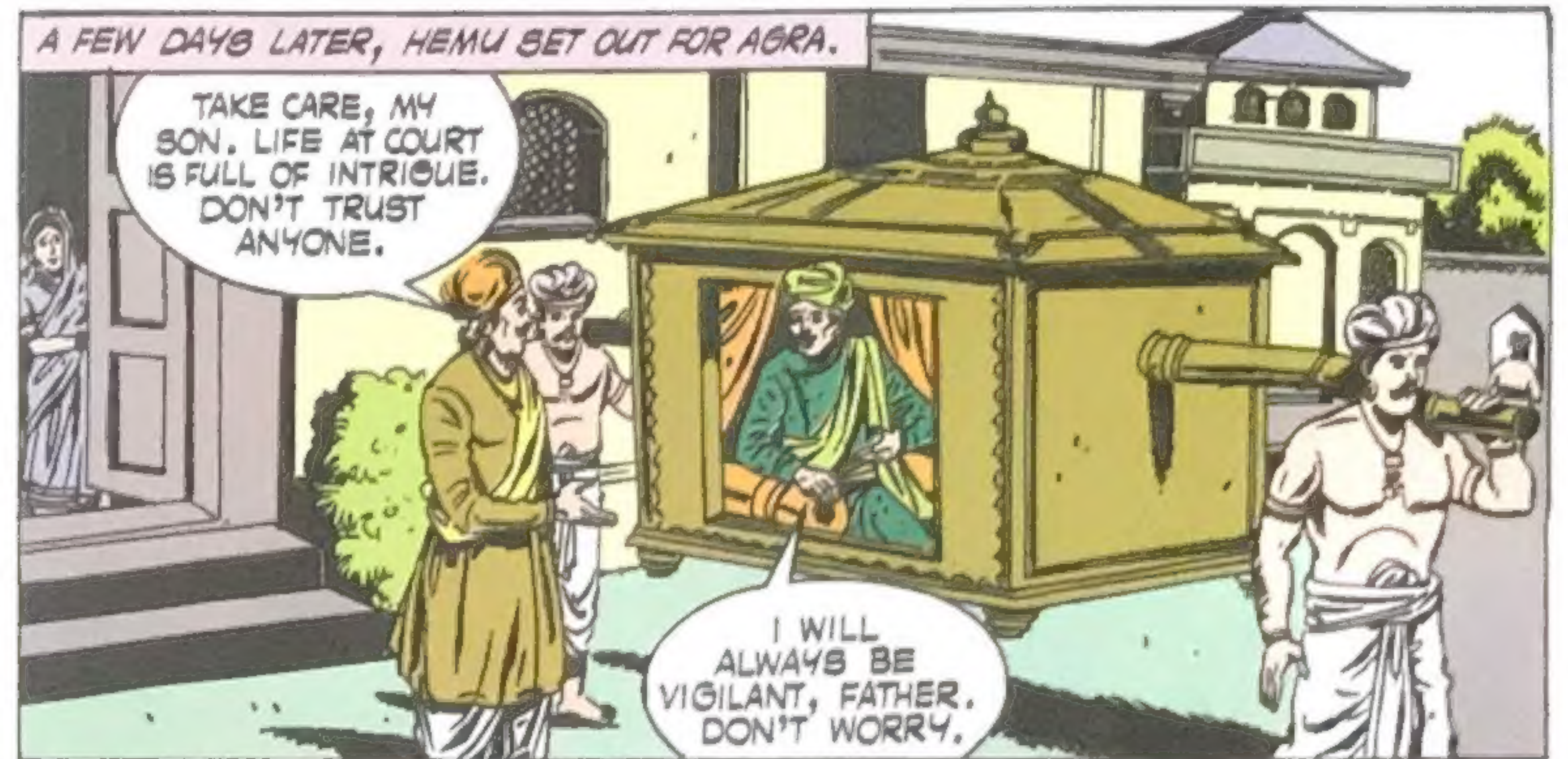
* IN MODERN PUNJAB—TO THE WEST OF REWARI



AS THE LAST SACK WAS CARRIED OUT—



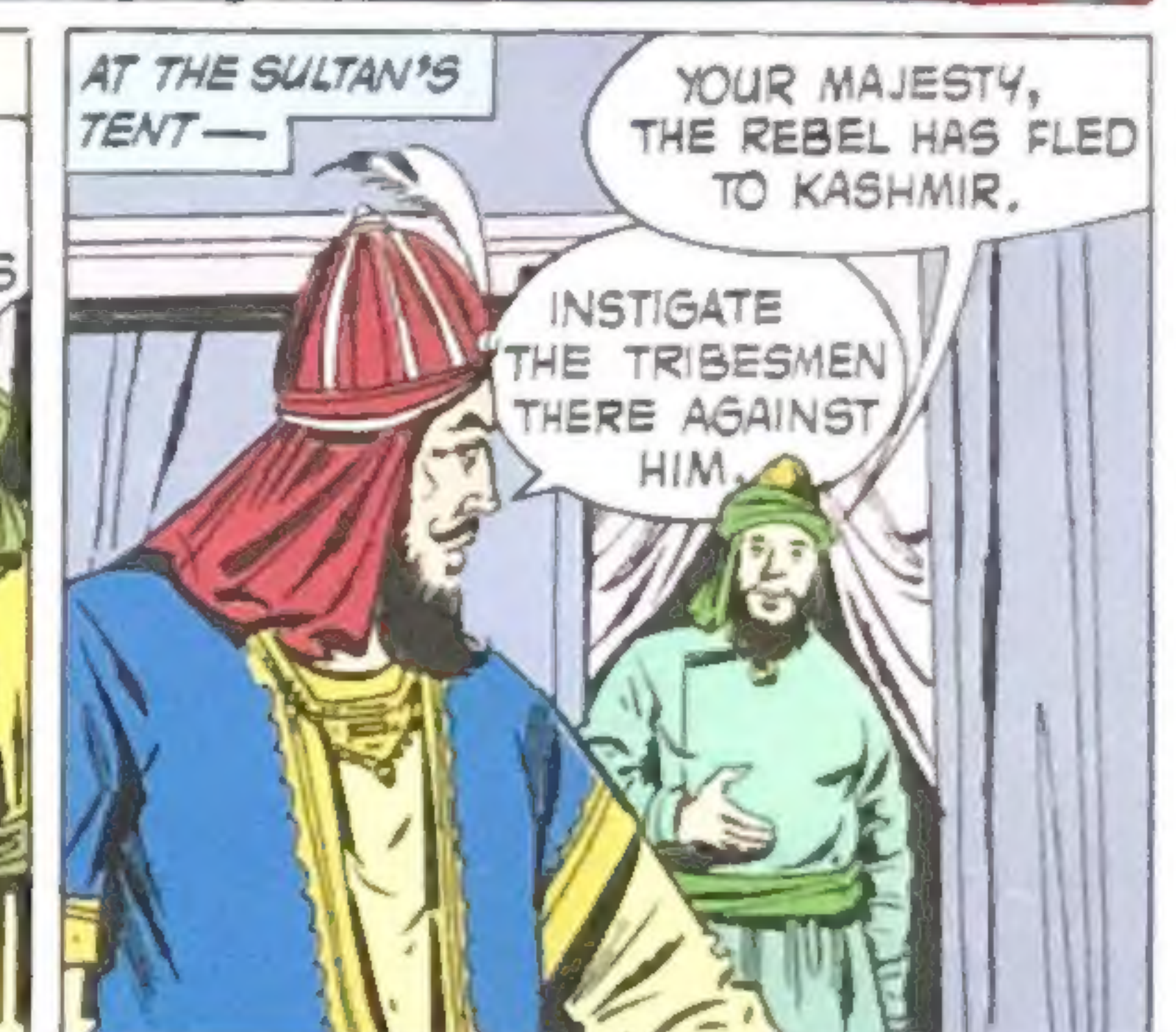
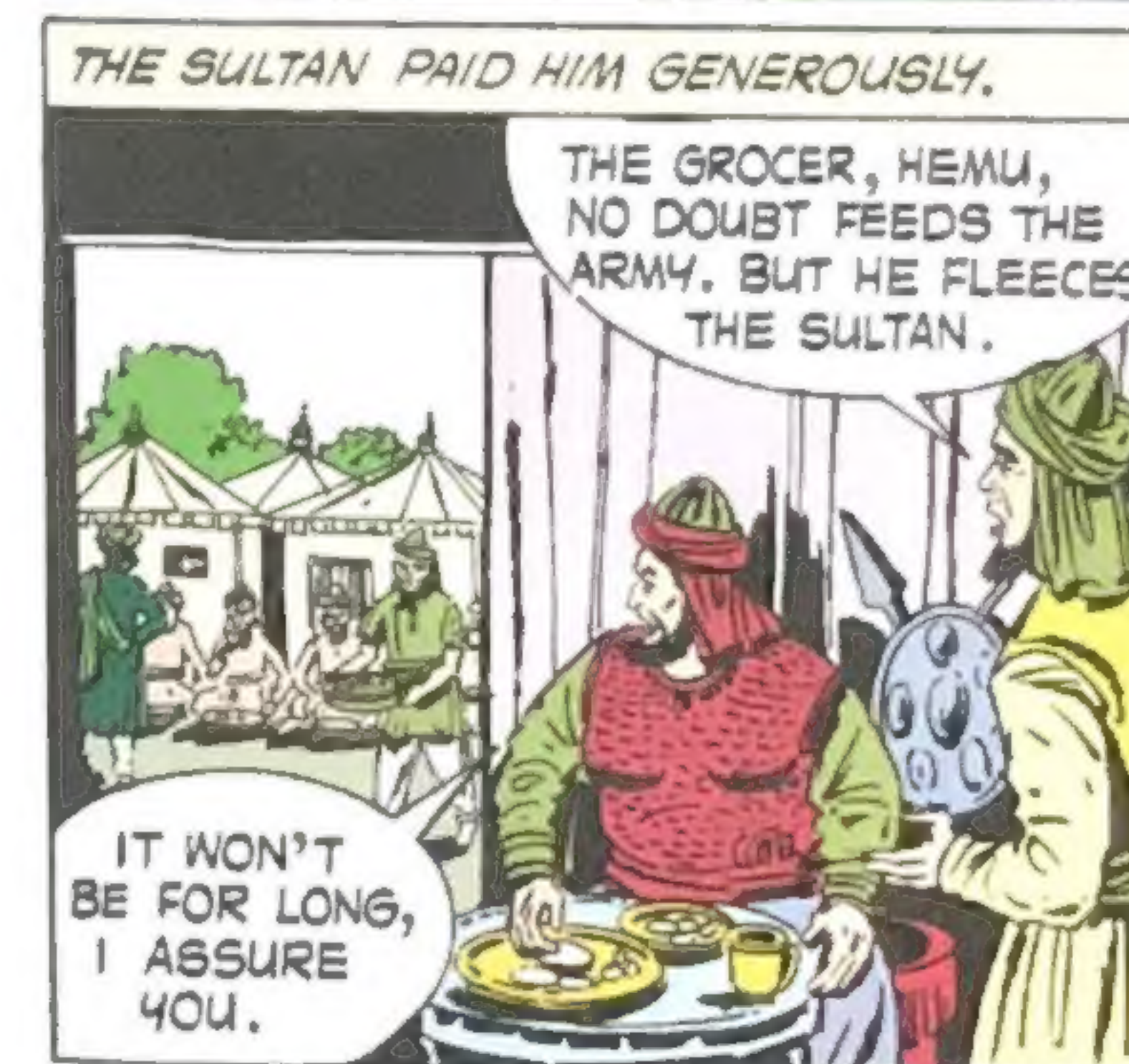
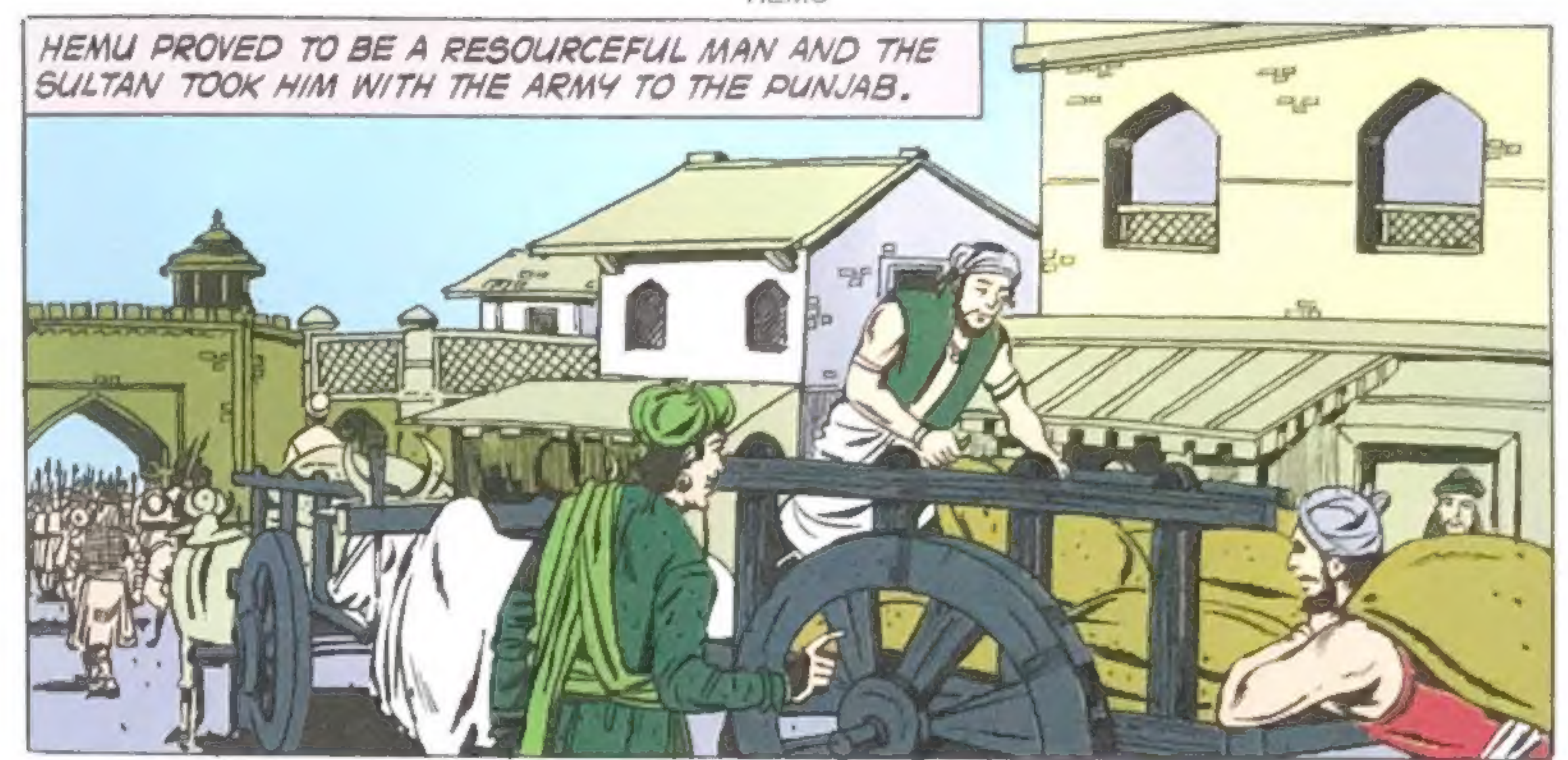
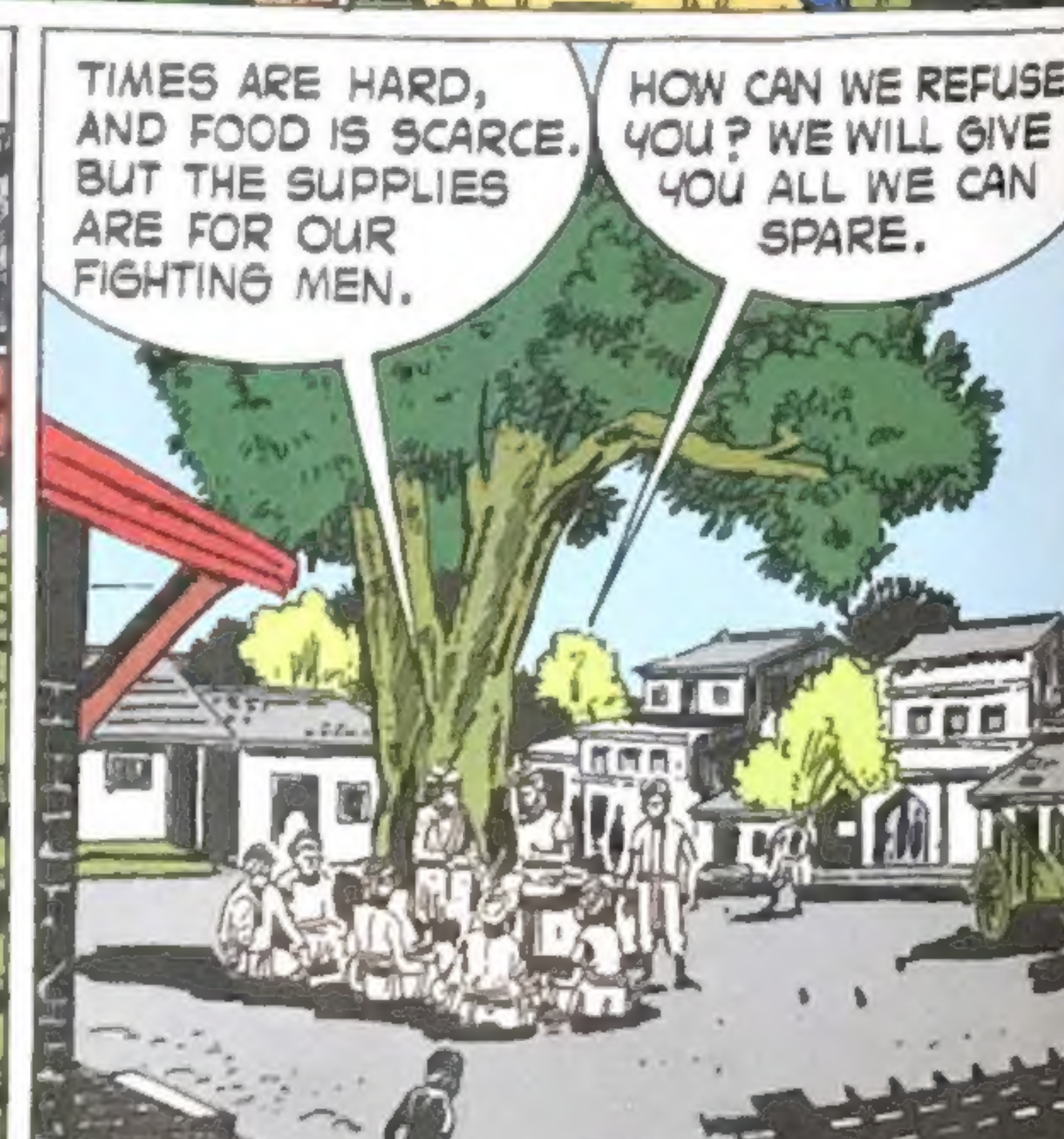
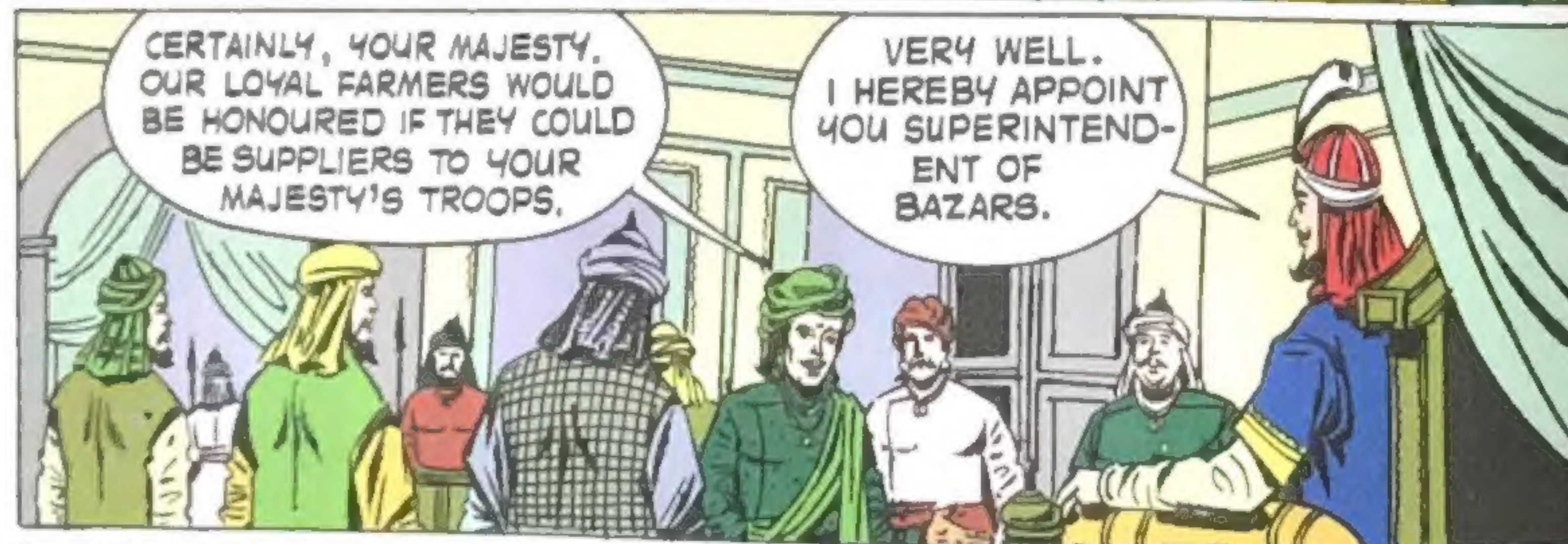
* AN ARMY OFFICER



SULTAN ISLAM SHAH, SON OF THE FAMOUS AFGHAN, SHER SHAH, WAS AN ABLE RULER. WHEN HEMU REACHED AGRA, THE SULTAN WAS PLANNING A CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE REBEL GOVERNOR OF THE PUNJAB.

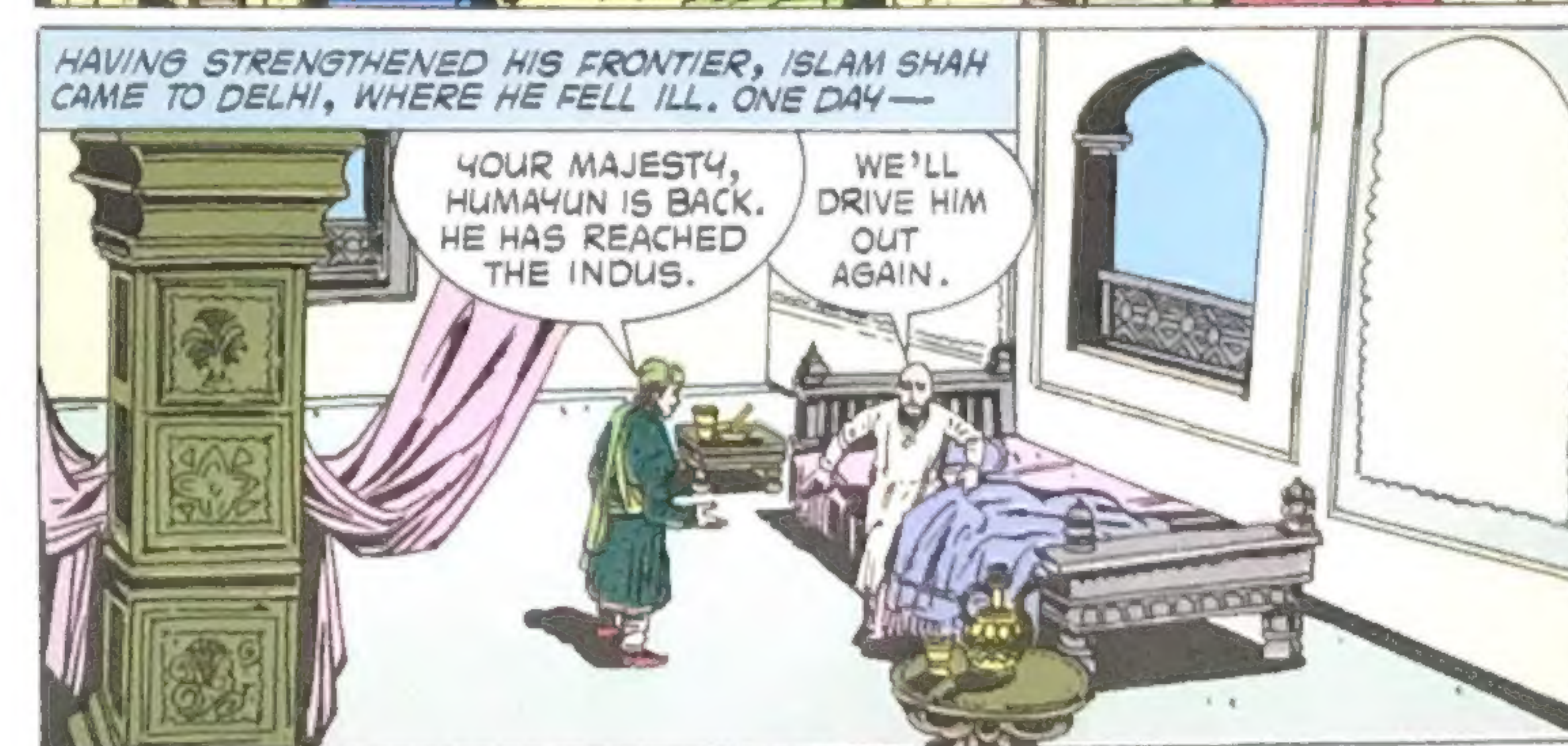
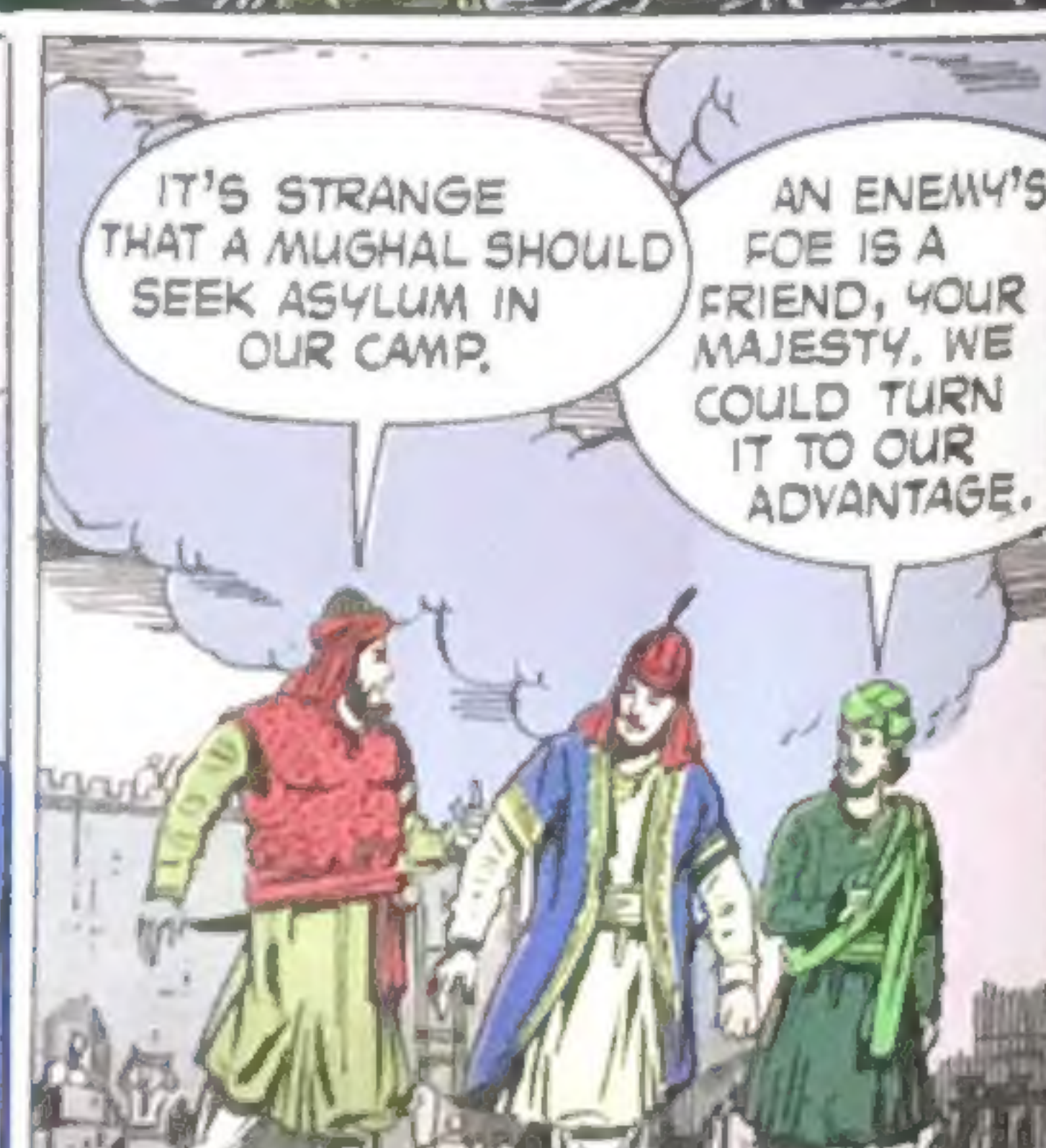


* THE SECOND MUGHAL EMPEROR





SO ISLAM SHAH STAYED IN THE PUNJAB. SOME TIME LATER—



THOUGH ILL, THE SULTAN HIMSELF LED HIS FORCES. WHEN THEY REACHED THE PUNJAB—

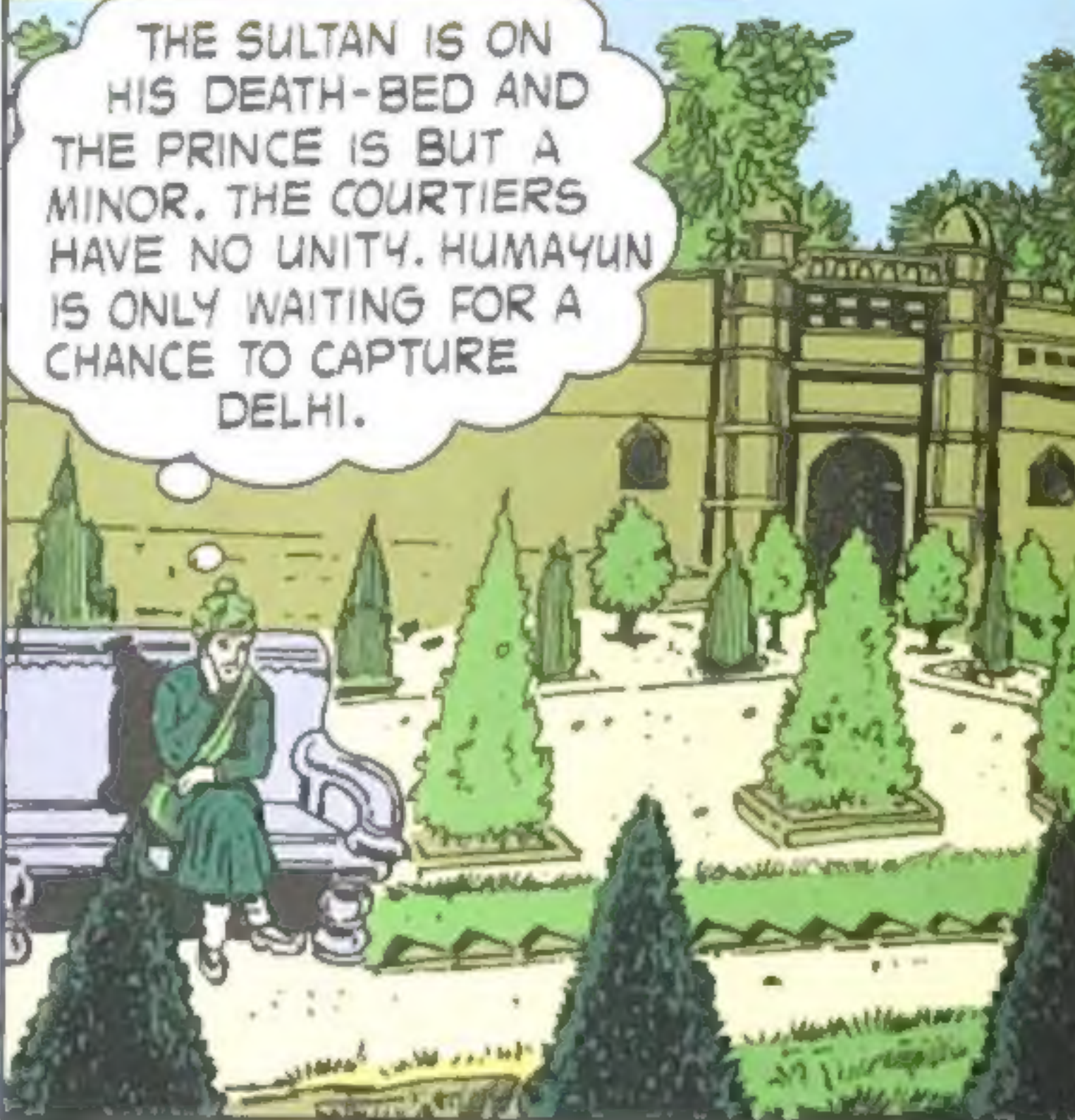
AS SOON AS HE HEARD OF OUR CAMPAIGN, HUMAYUN RETREATED TO KABUL.

THE COWARD!



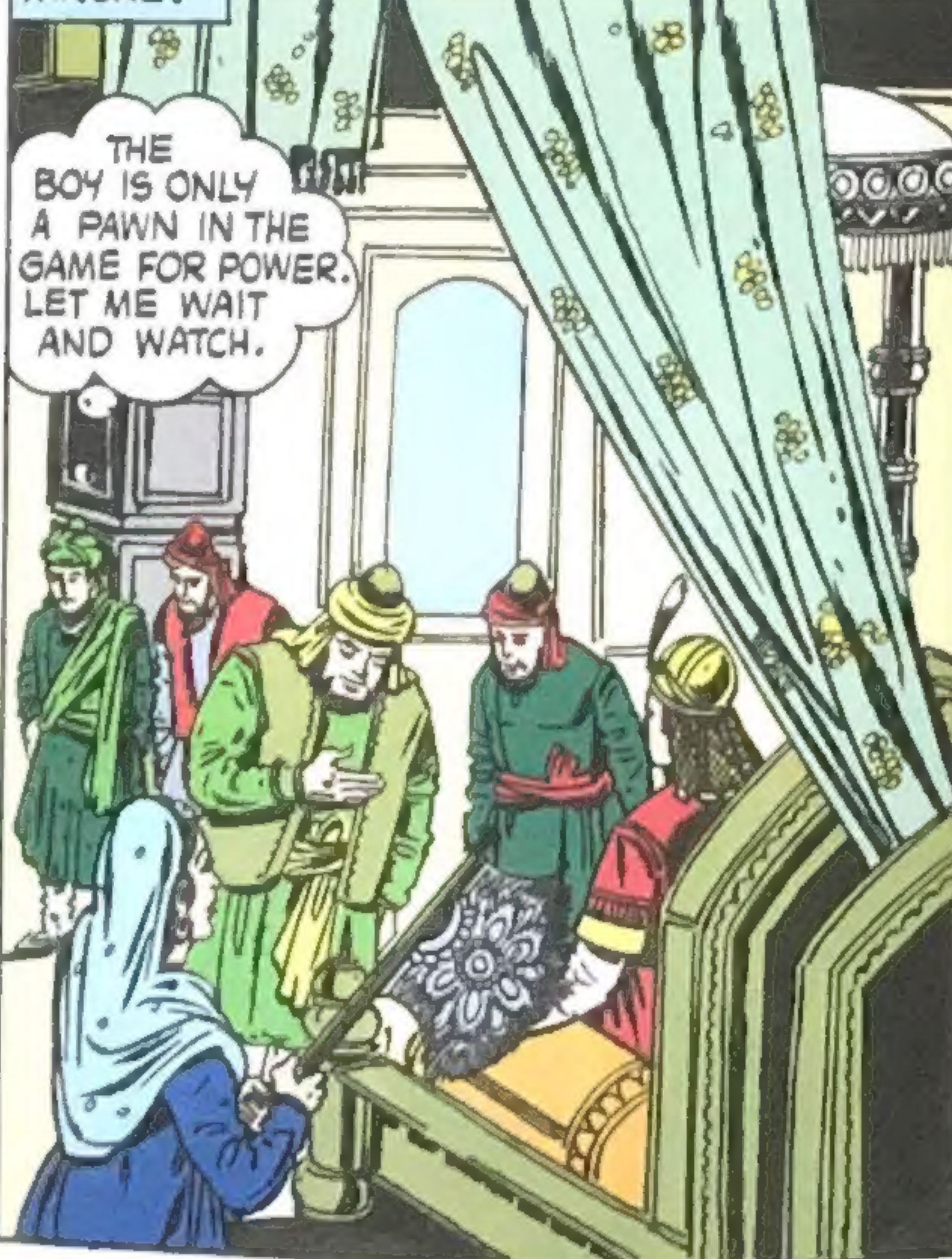
NOW SERIOUSLY ILL, ISLAM SHAH ACCOMPANIED BY HEMU, WENT TO HIS FAVOURITE RESTING-PLACE— GWALIOR.

THE SULTAN IS ON HIS DEATH-BED AND THE PRINCE IS BUT A MINOR. THE COURTIER'S HAVE NO UNITY. HUMAYUN IS ONLY WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO CAPTURE DELHI.



ON THE DEATH OF ISLAM SHAH, THE LOYAL NOBLES PLACED THE YOUNG PRINCE UPON THE THRONE.

THE BOY IS ONLY A PAWN IN THE GAME FOR POWER. LET ME WAIT AND WATCH.



I MUST BE CAUTIOUS. A FALSE MOVE CAN MEAN THE RUIN OF THE EMPIRE AND MY CAREER.



HEMU WAS PROVED RIGHT. THE YOUNG SULTAN WAS MURDERED BY HIS OWN UNCLE WHO LATER ASCENDED THE THRONE ASSUMING THE TITLE OF SULTAN MUHAMMAD ADIL SHAH.

I HAVE DECIDED TO TAKE UP THE REINS OF THE EMPIRE FOUNDED BY SHER SHAH, TO PROVIDE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION AND TO WIN GREATER GLORY.



SULTAN ADIL SHAH APPOINTED HEMU AS HIS MINISTER.

I AM DEEPLY HONOURED, YOUR MAJESTY. I SHALL SERVE YOU TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY.



I KNOW YOU WILL BE LOYAL. BESIDES, YOU, A HUMBLE GROCER, CAN NEVER BE A THREAT TO ME.



AFTER SETTLING MATTERS AT GWALIOR, ADIL SHAH LEFT WITH HEMU FOR CHUNAR, HIS STRONGHOLD IN THE EAST.



WHEN HE REACHED CHUNAR, ADIL SHAH FOUND A MESSENGER WAITING FOR HIM.

YOUR MAJESTY, JUNAID KHAN OF AJMER HAS REBELLED AGAINST YOU.

HE SHALL BE PUNISHED.



HEMU SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY.



MY COMMON SENSE AND INTELLIGENCE CAN LEAD THE SOLDIERS TO VICTORY. GIVE ME A CHANCE AND I'LL PROVE IT.



AT AJMER —



JUNAID KHAN SENT FOR HIS ABLE GENERAL.



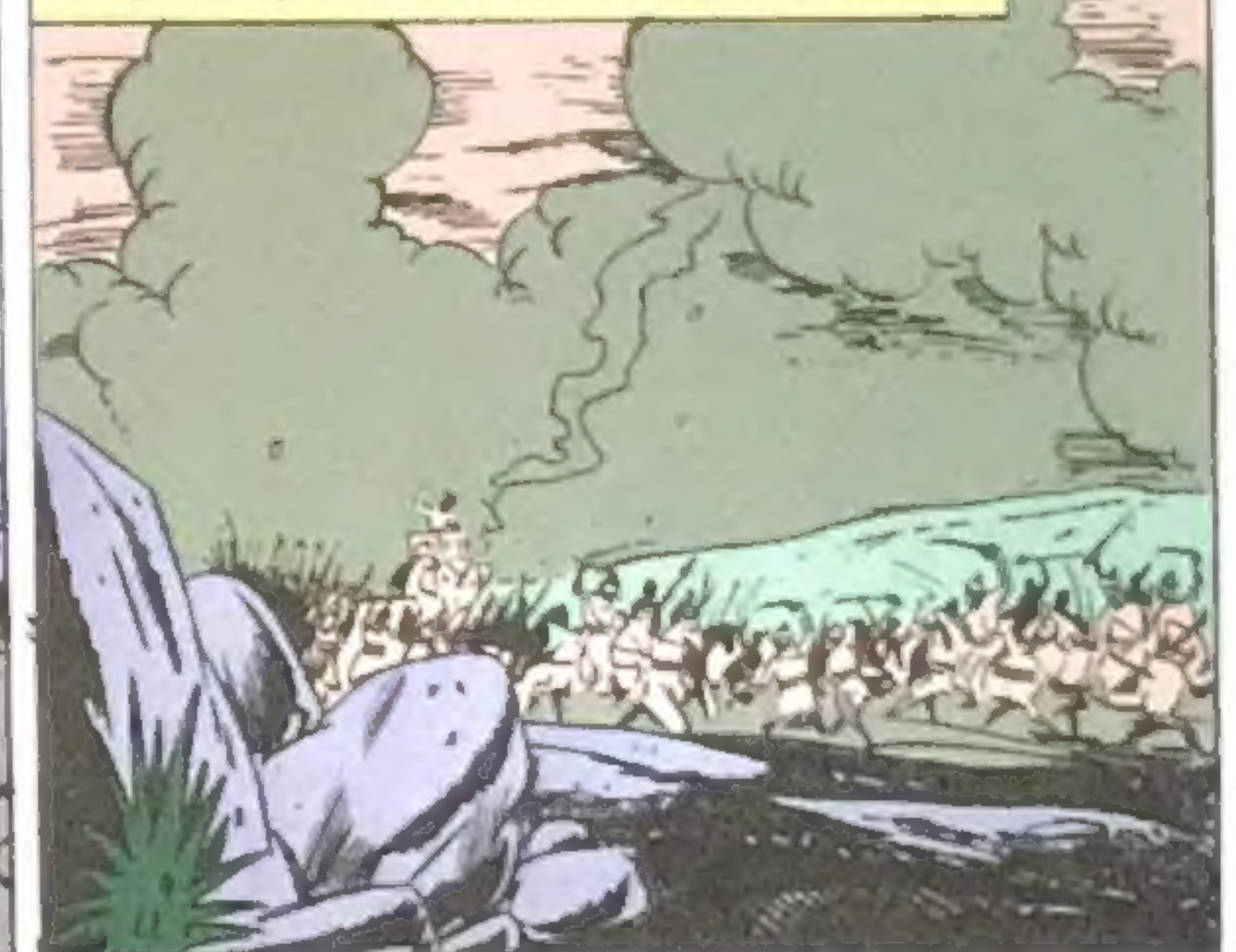
HEMU'S DEFENSIVE TACTICS MADE DAULAT KHAN BELIEVE THAT VICTORY WAS WITHIN HIS GRASP.



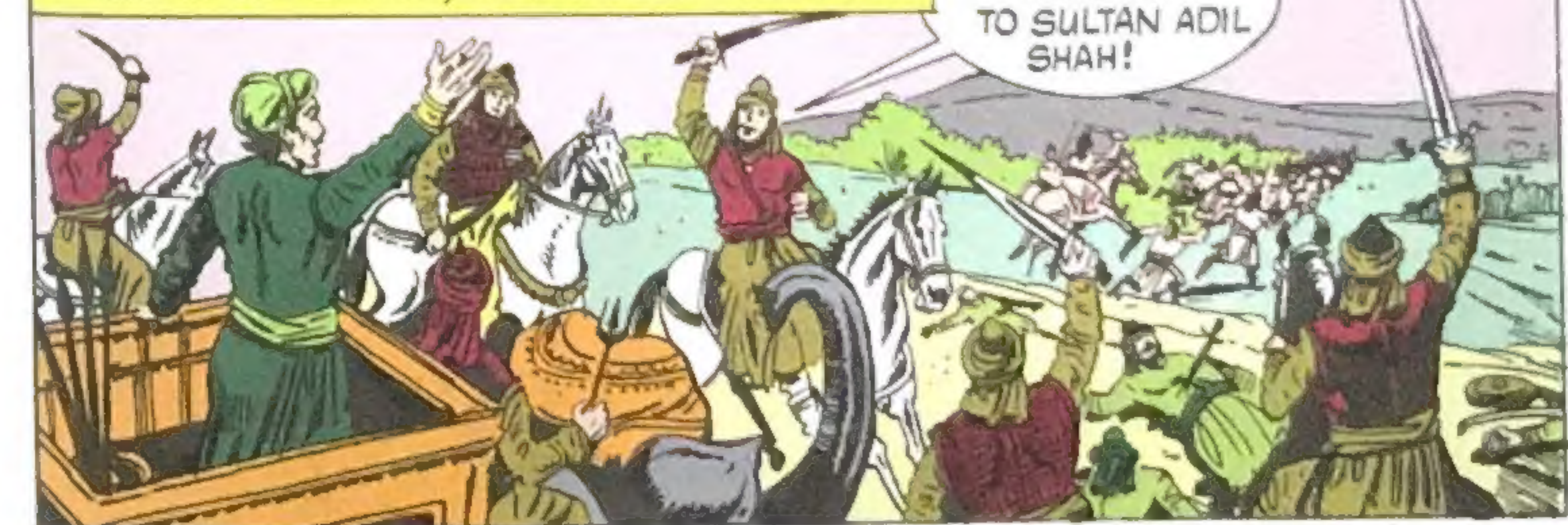
AT HEMU'S CAMP —



AT DAWN, THE OPPONENTS MET...



... AND IN THE BATTLE, DAULAT KHAN WAS SLAIN.



WHEN JUNAID KHAN LEARNT ABOUT THE DEFEAT OF HIS MEN, HE WAS FURIOUS.



PREPARE TO MARCH AT ONCE!

AT HEMU'S CAMP—



THEY HAVE MORE MEN THAN I DO AND MY MEN LIE TIRED AND WOUNDED. BUT I MUST WIN! MY FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT.



FRIENDS, WE CANNOT HOPE TO FIGHT THE ENEMY BY DAY. IF, HOWEVER, YOU CAN MAKE AN EFFORT TONIGHT, WE COULD ROUT JUNAID KHAN'S FORCES.

SELECTING A FEW STRONG MEN, HEMU SLOWLY MOVED TOWARDS THE ENEMY CAMP...



... AND AT NIGHT, WHEN JUNAID KHAN'S FORCES WERE ASLEEP, HE ATTACKED.



THE ENEMY WAS TAKEN BY SURPRISE.



I'D BETTER ESCAPE WHILE I CAN.

A TRIUMPHANT HEMU RETURNED TO THE COURT AT GWALIOR WITH HIS AFGHAN SOLDIERS.



WITH THIS VICTORY, YOU HAVE INDEED PROVED YOUR METTLE, HEMU. THESE ROYAL ROBES ARE YOUR REWARD.



THE REWARD SHOULD BY RIGHT GO TO MY FEARLESS SOLDIERS, YOUR MAJESTY.

LET THE MEN BE RICHLY REWARDED.

BUT THE AFGHAN NOBLES RESENTED HEMU'S GROWING INFLUENCE.

THIS GROVER IS NO STATESMAN. HIS ADVICE TO THE SULTAN, TO SEIZE THE JAGIRS FROM THE POWERFUL NOBLES FOR REDISTRIBUTION, IS DANGEROUS.

WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR, TAJ KHAN. WE ARE THE SULTAN'S FAVOURITES.



FIRMULI, YOU'LL SOON BE DISILLUSIONED. AS FOR ME, I AM LEAVING GWALIOR TODAY. WILL YOU GO WITH ME?

NO, TAJ KHAN. I CHOOSE TO STAY HERE.



AT COURT THAT DAY —

KANAUJ IS TO BE HANDED OVER TO SIRMASHT KHAN SIRPANI.



KANAUJ WAS THE JAGIR OF MUHAMMED FIRMULI. HIS YOUNG SON, SIKANDAR KHAN, OBJECTED LOUDLY.

OUR ESTATE TO GO INTO THE HANDS OF THE SIRPANI CURS!

MY NOBLE SON! PROTEST LIKE A COURTIER, IF PROTEST YOU MUST!



SIRMASHT KHAN SIRPANI APPROACHED THE YOUNG SIKANDAR KHAN.

YOUR WORDS ARE NEEDLESSLY HARSH, MY SON.

THAT'S A CLEVER APPROACH, SIRMASHT KHAN!



YOU DON'T LIKE MY WORDS... THEN TAKE THIS!

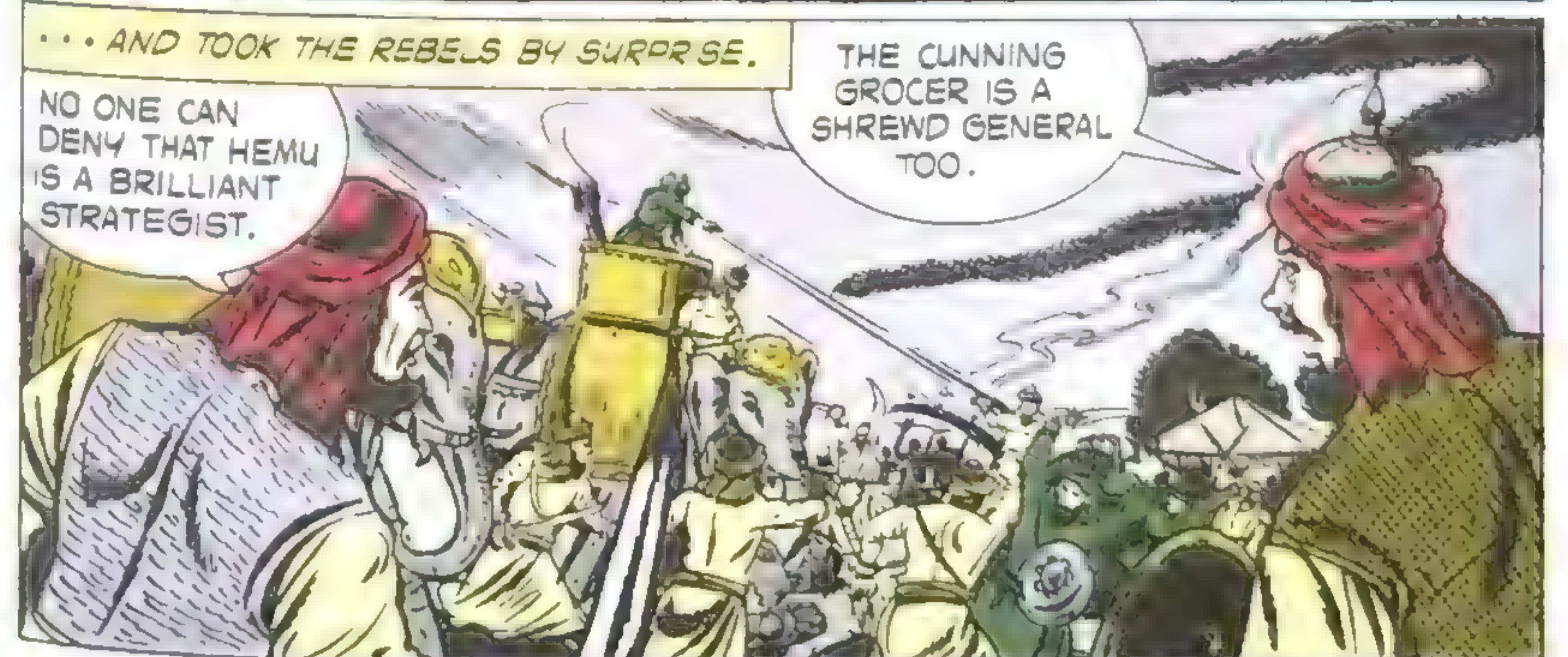
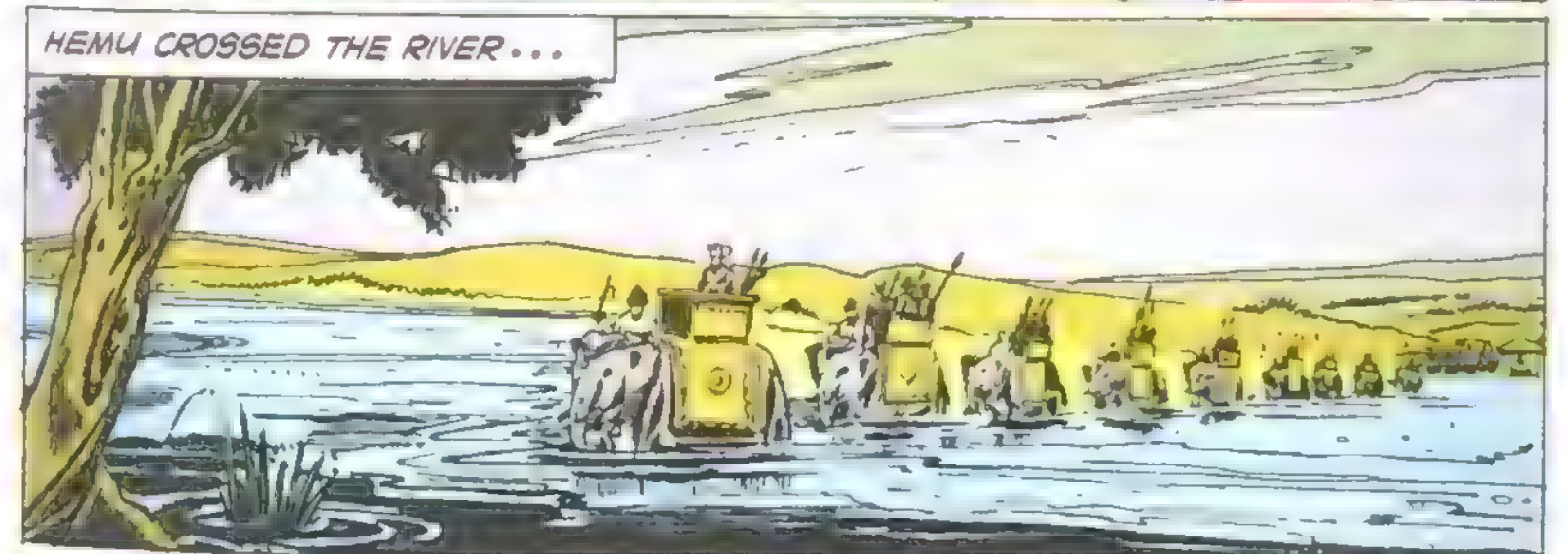
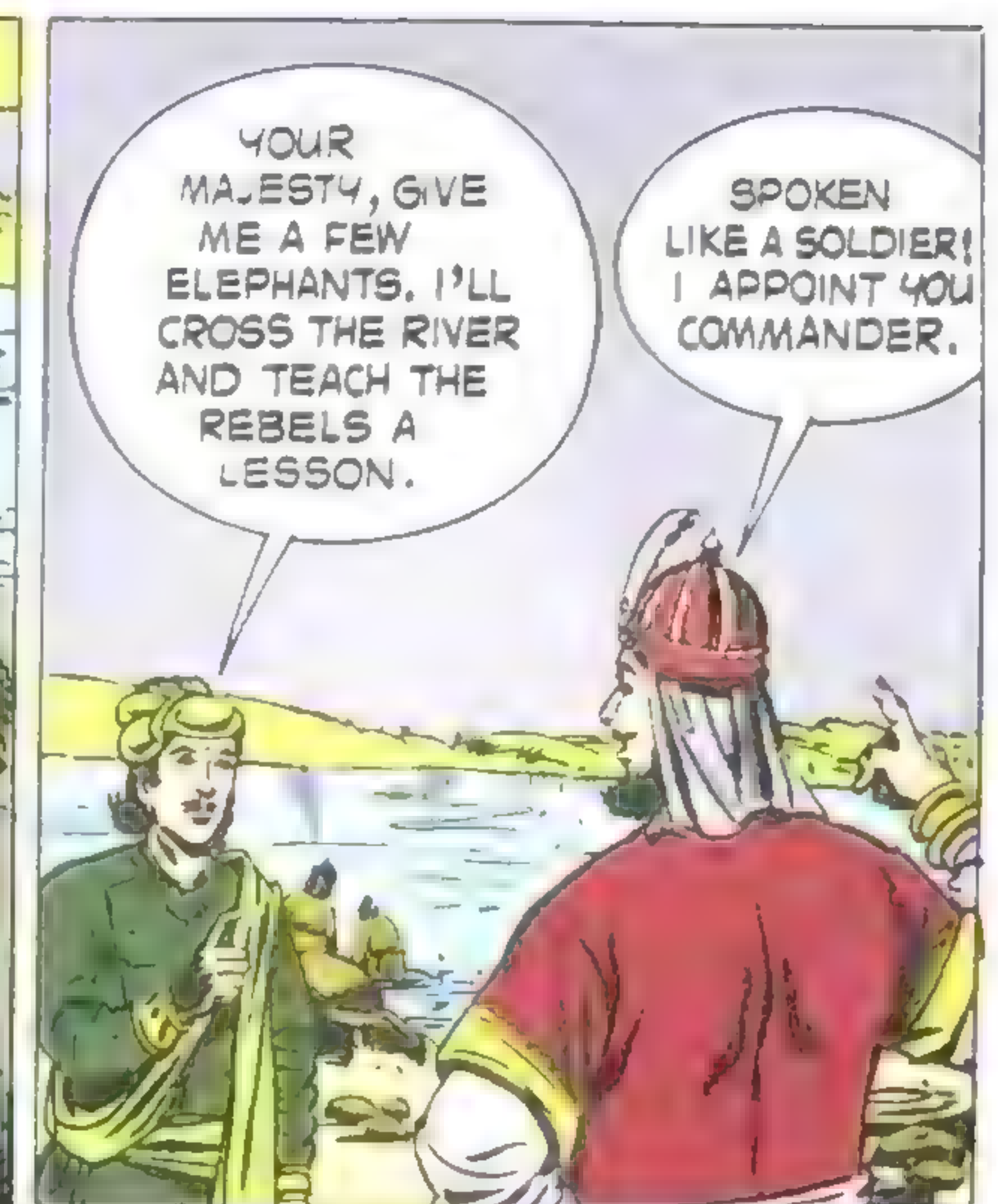
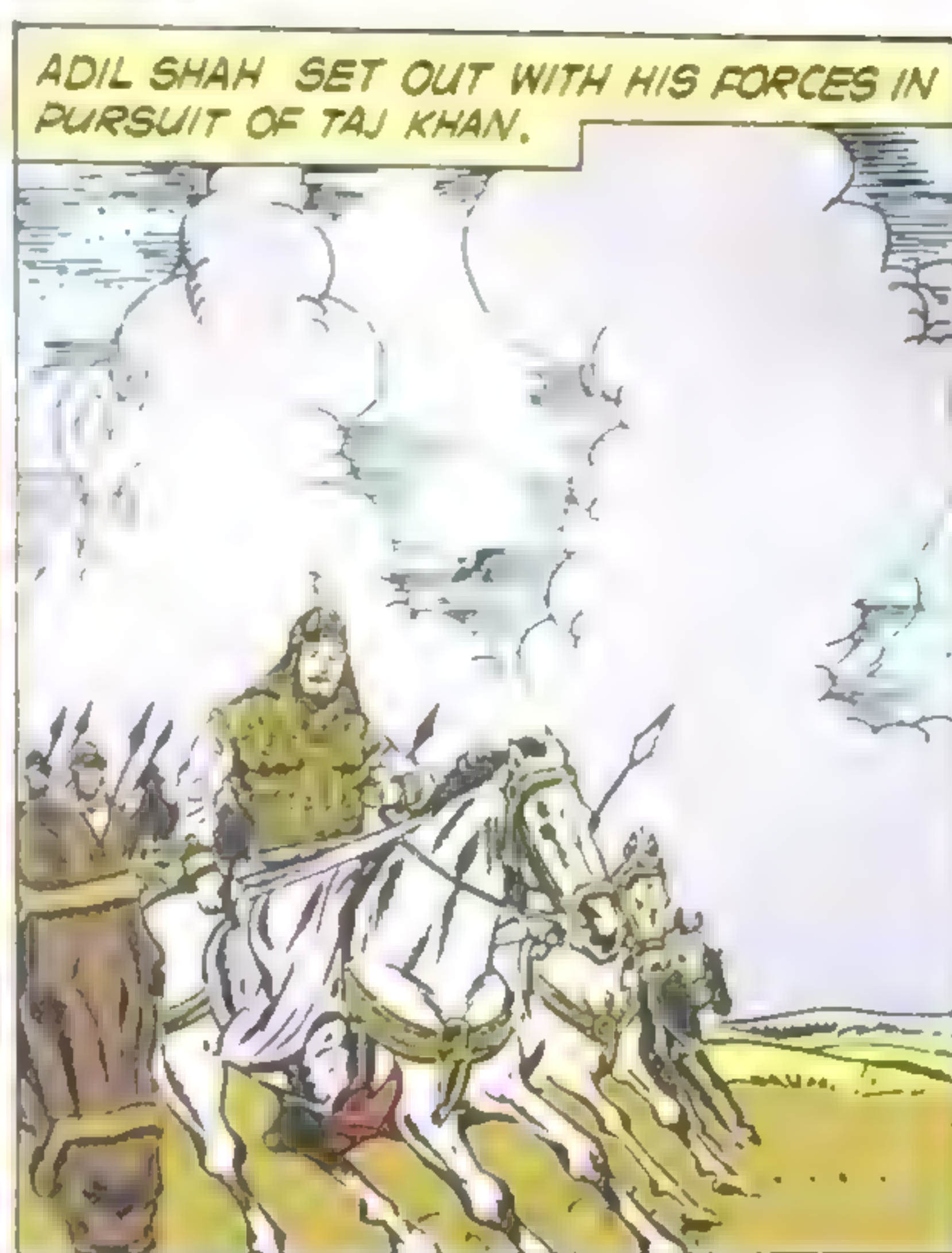


EVEN AS SIRMASHT KHAN FELL, THE OTHER NOBLES POUNCED ON SIKANDAR KHAN.

YOUR MAJESTY, FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY, PLEASE LEAVE THE COURT.



IN THE SCUFFLE, FIRMULI AND HIS SON WERE KILLED.



HEMU'S FORCES DEFEATED THE REBELS AND TAJ KHAN FLED TO BENGAL.



WHEN THE VICTORIOUS HEMU CAME TO CHUNAR—

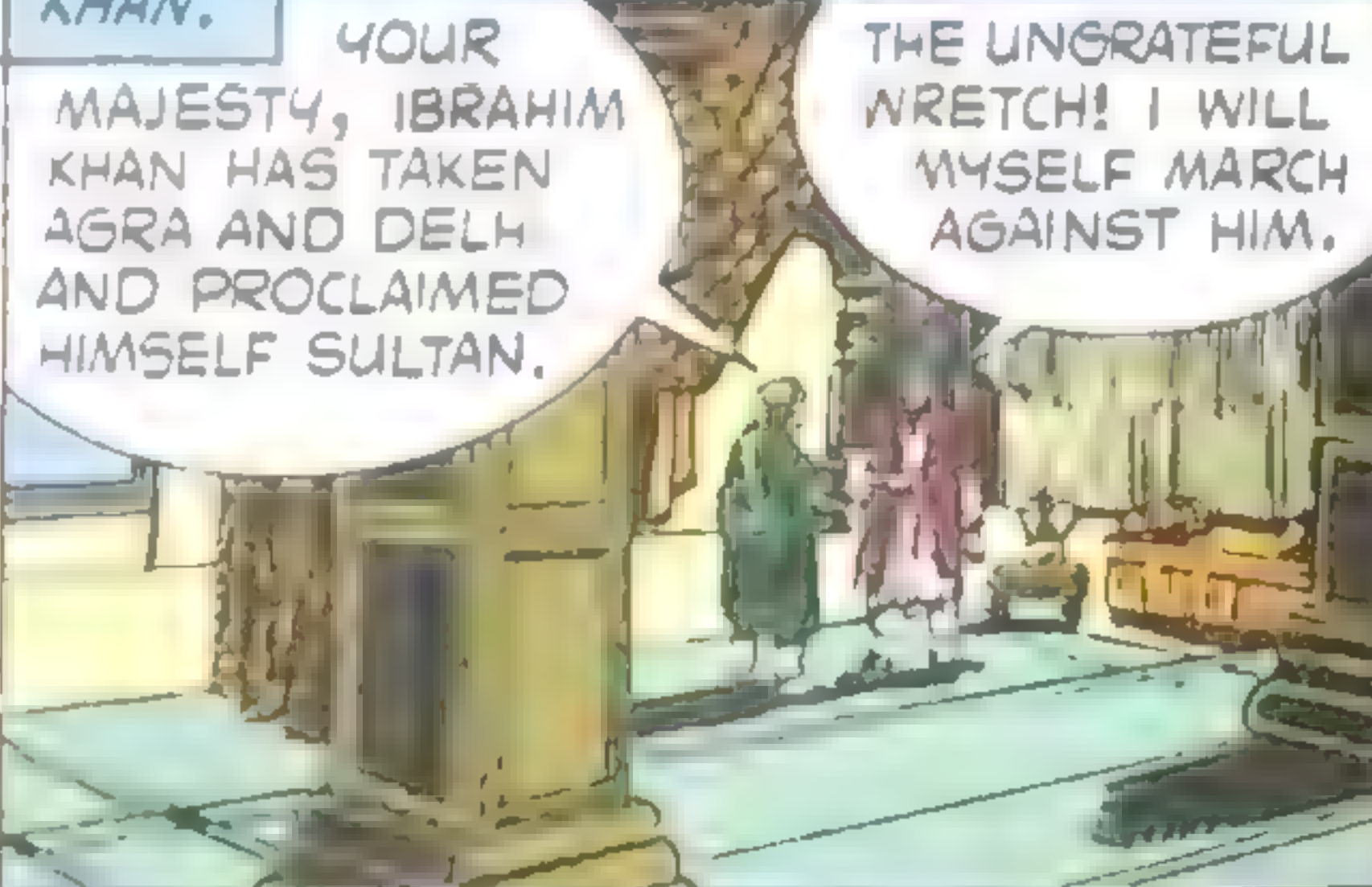


WELL DONE, HEMU! TAJ KHAN WILL NEVER AGAIN DARE TO DEFEY MY AUTHORITY.

BUT THERE WERE OTHER AFGHANS WHO TRIED TO DEFEY THE SULTAN. ONE OF THEM WAS HIS OWN BROTHER-IN-LAW, IBRAHIM KHAN.

YOUR MAJESTY, IBRAHIM KHAN HAS TAKEN AGRA AND DELHI AND PROCLAIMED HIMSELF SULTAN.

THE UNGRATEFUL WRETCH! I WILL MYSELF MARCH AGAINST HIM.



WHEN ADIL SHAH REACHED THE YAMUNA, AN ENVOY FROM IBRAHIM KHAN MET HIM.

YOUR MAJESTY, MY MASTER IBRAHIM KHAN APOLOGISES AND BEGS YOUR FORGIVENESS. HE WILL SURRENDER HIMSELF TO YOUR SENIOR GENERALS.

IT'S A RUSE. I MUST WARN THE KING.



DON'T AGREE TO IBRAHIM'S REQUEST, YOUR MAJESTY. WE SHOULD ATTACK AT ONCE.

LET US AVOID A BATTLE IF WE CAN. WHAT HARM CAN THERE BE IN SENDING MY GENERALS?



ADIL SHAH SENT THE GENERALS AND A FEW MEN WITH THE ENVOY.



AS SOON AS THEY REACHED IBRAHIM'S CAMP—

I AM NOW THE SULTAN OF DELHI AND AGRA. ADIL SHAH IS ONLY A PUPPET IN THE HANDS OF THAT COMMON TRADESMAN. WHO WILL YOU FOLLOW?

WE WILL FOLLOW YOU, MY LORD.



AT ADIL SHAH'S CAMP—

THE TRAITORS! I NEVER DREAMT THEY'D BETRAY MY TRUST.

YOUR MAJESTY, YOUR GENERALS HAVE DESERTED US.



AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME, THE GOVERNORS OF BENGAL AND LAHORE DECLARED THEIR INDEPENDENCE. THE EMPIRE BEGAN TO FALL APART.



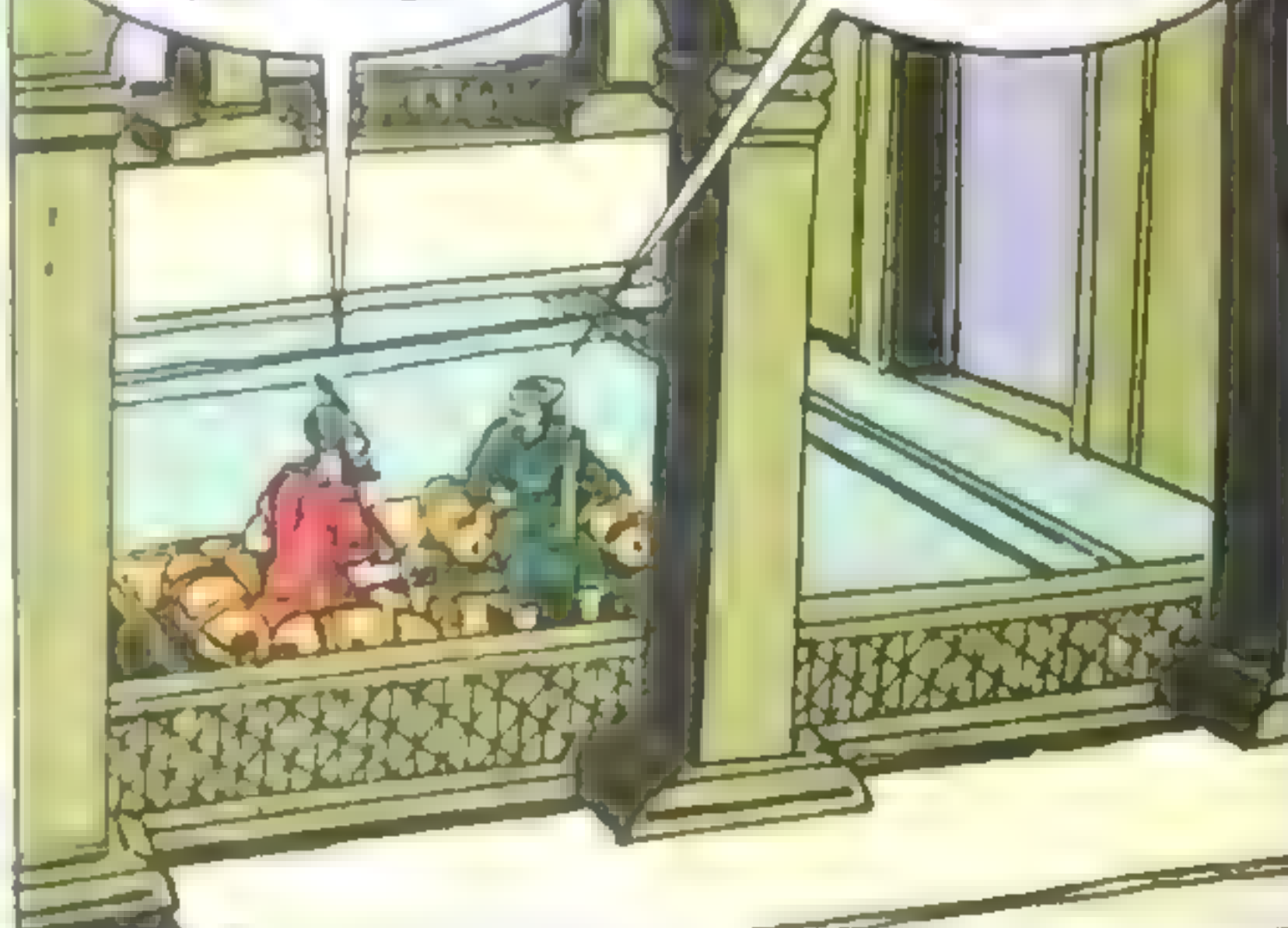
WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

AGRA IS NOT SAFE AT PRESENT. WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO RETURN TO CHUNAR.

IBRAHIM KHAN DID NOT RULE FOR LONG. HE WAS OVERTHROWN BY HIS OWN COUSIN WHO ASSUMED THE NAME SIKANDAR SHAH. WHEN THE NEWS REACHED CHUNAR—

IF WE AFGHANS CONTINUE TO FIGHT AMONG OURSELVES, THE EMPIRE OF SHER SHAH WILL BE REDUCED TO NOTHING.

WE HAVE NEVER NEEDED UNITY MORE. HUMAYUN IS READY TO INVADE HINDUSTAN!



SOON—

YOUR MAJESTY! HUMAYUN HAS DEFEATED SIKANDAR SHAH AND OCCUPIED DELHI.

HEMU, THIS IS THE MOST TRAGIC DAY IN AFGHAN HISTORY. WE HAVE LOST EVERYTHING SHER SHAH WORKED FOR AND WE HAVE NO ONE TO BLAME BUT OURSELVES!



YOUR MAJESTY, WE HAVE ONLY TO BIDE OUR TIME. WE WILL REGAIN DELHI, I ASSURE YOU.



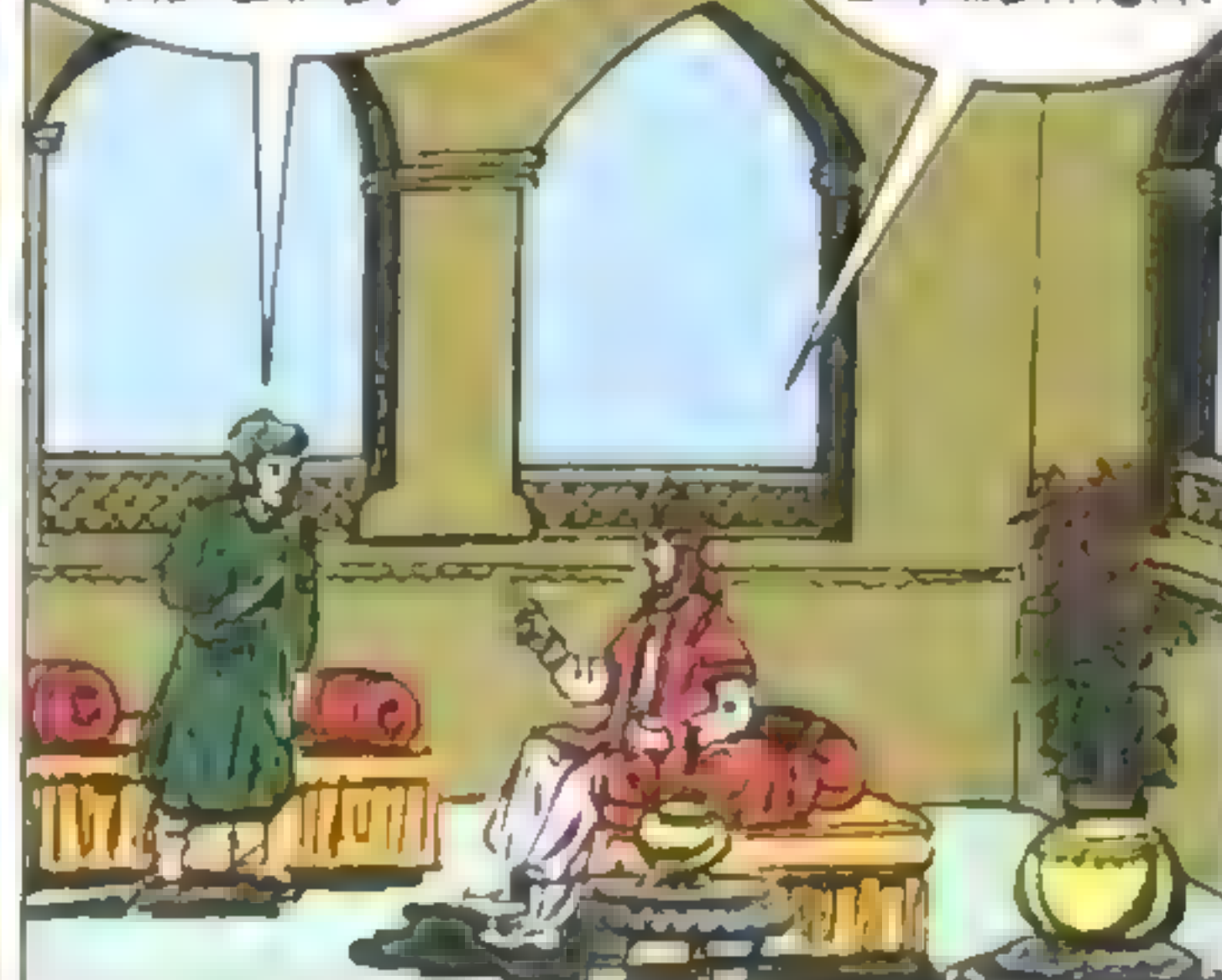
A YEAR LATER—



YOUR MAJESTY, HUMAYUN IS DEAD. HE FELL FROM A STAIRCASE WHILE HURRYING TO SAY HIS EVENING PRAYERS.

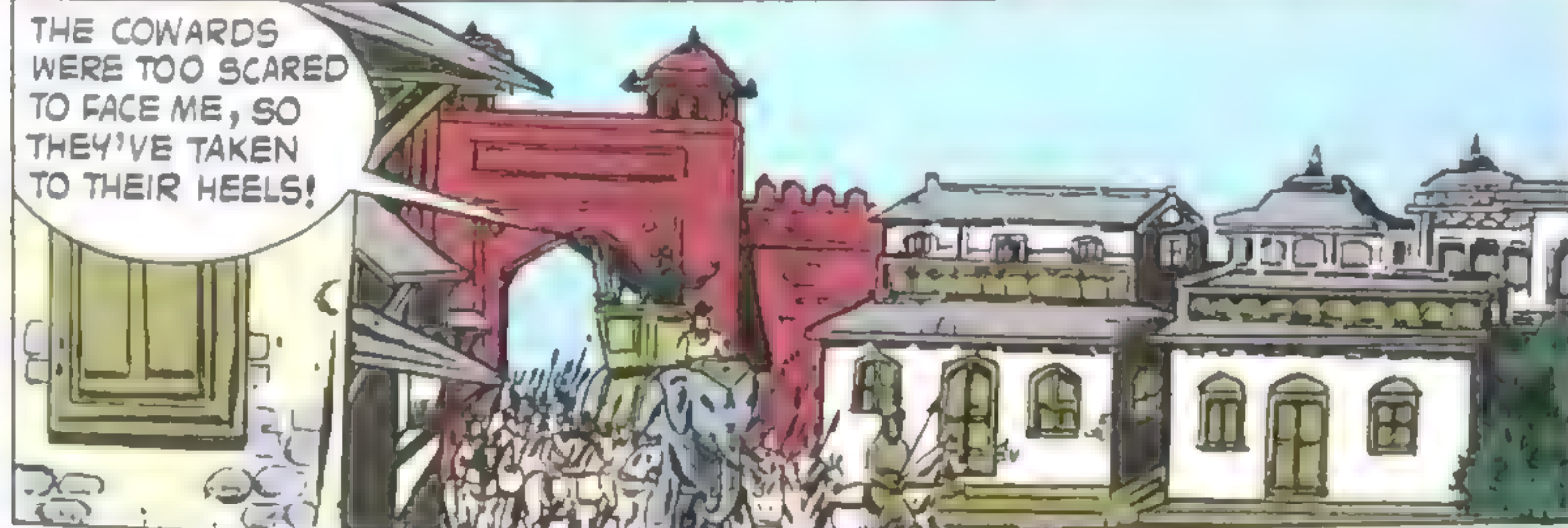
AKBAR, HIS SUCCESSOR, IS ONLY A CHILD. YOUR MAJESTY, NOW IS OUR CHANCE TO WIPE OUT THE MUGHALS FROM THE LAND.

YOU ARE RIGHT, HEMU! YOU SHALL LEAD THE EXPEDITION.



WHEN HEMU REACHED AGRA, HE FOUND THE FORT DESERTED BY THE MUGHALS.

THE COWARDS WERE TOO SCARED TO FACE ME, SO THEY'VE TAKEN TO THEIR HEELS!



SOLDIERS AND NOBLES, LET US CLOSE IN ON DELHI AT ONCE AND CATCH THE MUGHAL RATS IN A TRAP.

LEAD ON, HEMU. WE'LL FOLLOW.



AT THE MUGHAL COURT IN DELHI, TARDI BEG, THE GOVERNOR HELD CONSULTATIONS WITH HIS GENERALS.



HEMU IS ON HIS WAY WITH A HUGE ARMY. HE IS OUT TO CRUSH US.

WE CANNOT DEFEND DELHI. WE MUST RETREAT TO THE PUNJAB AND JOIN PRINCE AKBAR.

BUT THIS SUGGESTION WAS VEHEMENTLY OPPOSED.

RUN AWAY EVEN BEFORE THE ENEMY IS SIGHTED! PEOPLE WILL LAUGH AT US.

AND HOW COULD WE EVER FACE PRINCE AKBAR?



TARDI BEG GAVE HIS DECISION.

WE'LL STAY HERE AND DEFEND DELHI. BUT WE'LL KEEP THE LINES OF RETREAT OPEN.



THE MUGHALS WERE FULLY PREPARED WHEN HEMU ATTACKED.



MY MEN ARE LOSING GROUND!

HEMU WAS IN THE THICK OF THE BATTLE, ENCOURAGING HIS MEN.



FIGHT, MEN! FINISH THE MUGHALS! WE WILL TAKE DELHI!

HIS CHARGE ROUTED THE MUGHALS.



THEY HAD TO FLEE, LEAVING A LARGE NUMBER DEAD.



HEMU KI JAI!

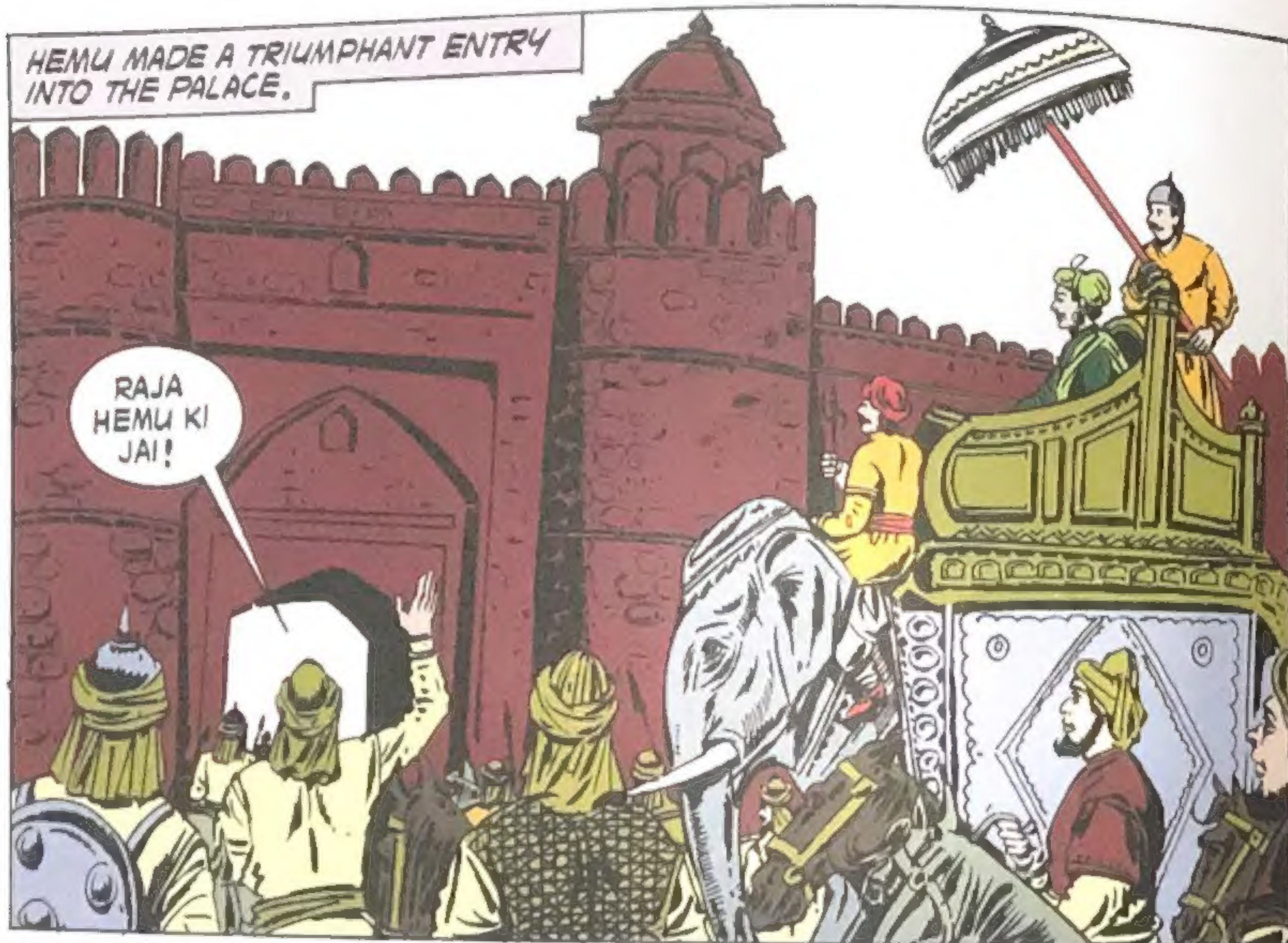
ALL THE MUGHAL WEALTH FELL INTO HEMU'S HANDS.



DISTRIBUTE THE BOOTY AMONG YOURSELVES. FOR THOSE WILLING TO DIE FOR THEIR KING, THE REWARD SHOULD BE HIGH!

LONG LIVE HEMU!

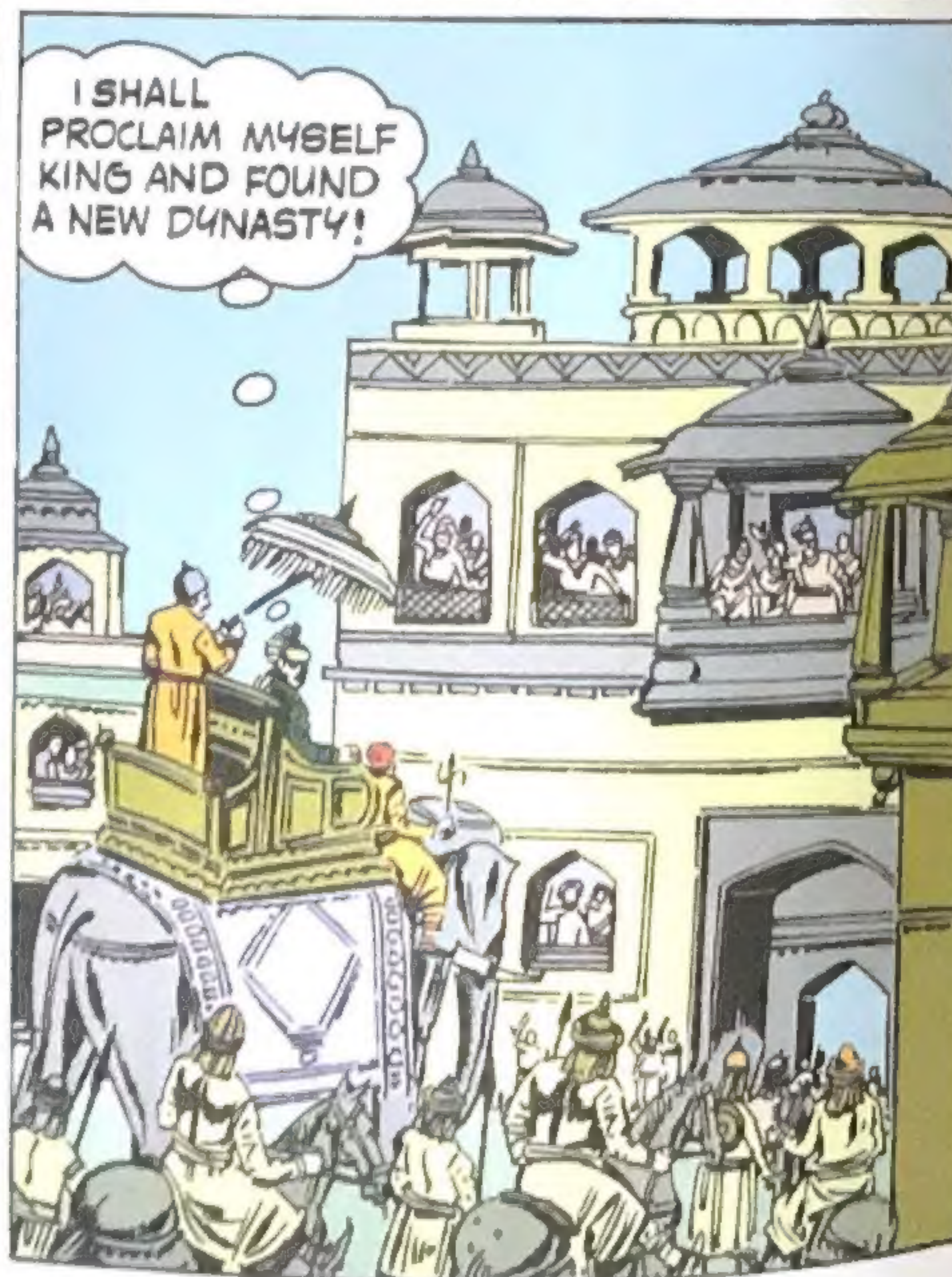
HEMU MADE A TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO THE PALACE.



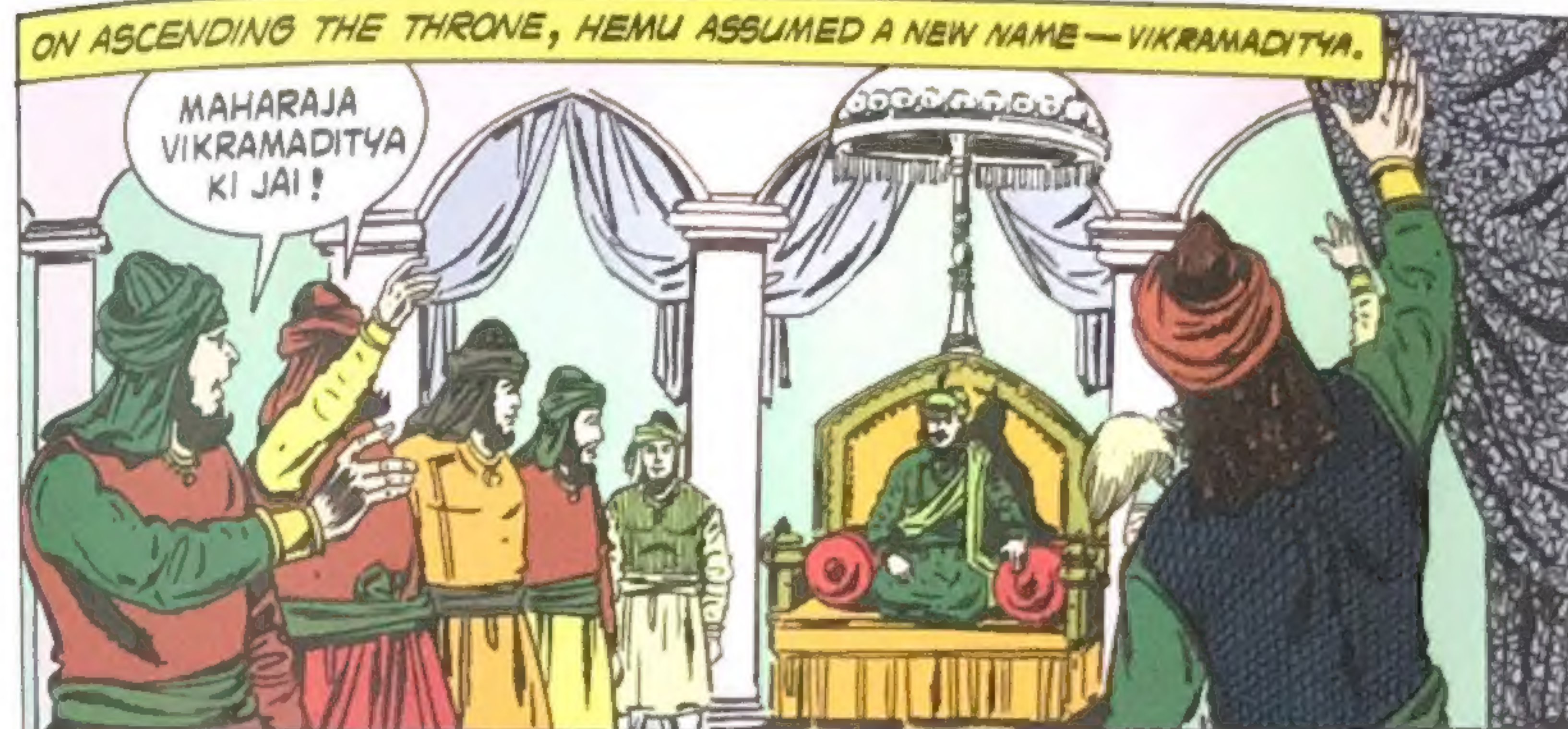
RAJA HEMU? WHY NOT? DELHI BELONGS TO ME. THE AFGHANS ARE FIGHTING AMONG THEMSELVES, AND THE MUGHALS ARE WITHOUT A LEADER.



I SHALL PROCLAIM MYSELF KING AND FOUND A NEW DYNASTY!



ON ASCENDING THE THRONE, HEMU ASSUMED A NEW NAME — VIKRAMADITYA.



HEMU'S FIRST CONCERN WAS TO DEFEND HIS NEW-FOUND KINGDOM AGAINST THE MUGHAL ARMY DESPATCHED BY AKBAR.



THAT NIGHT HEMU HAD A NIGHTMARE.

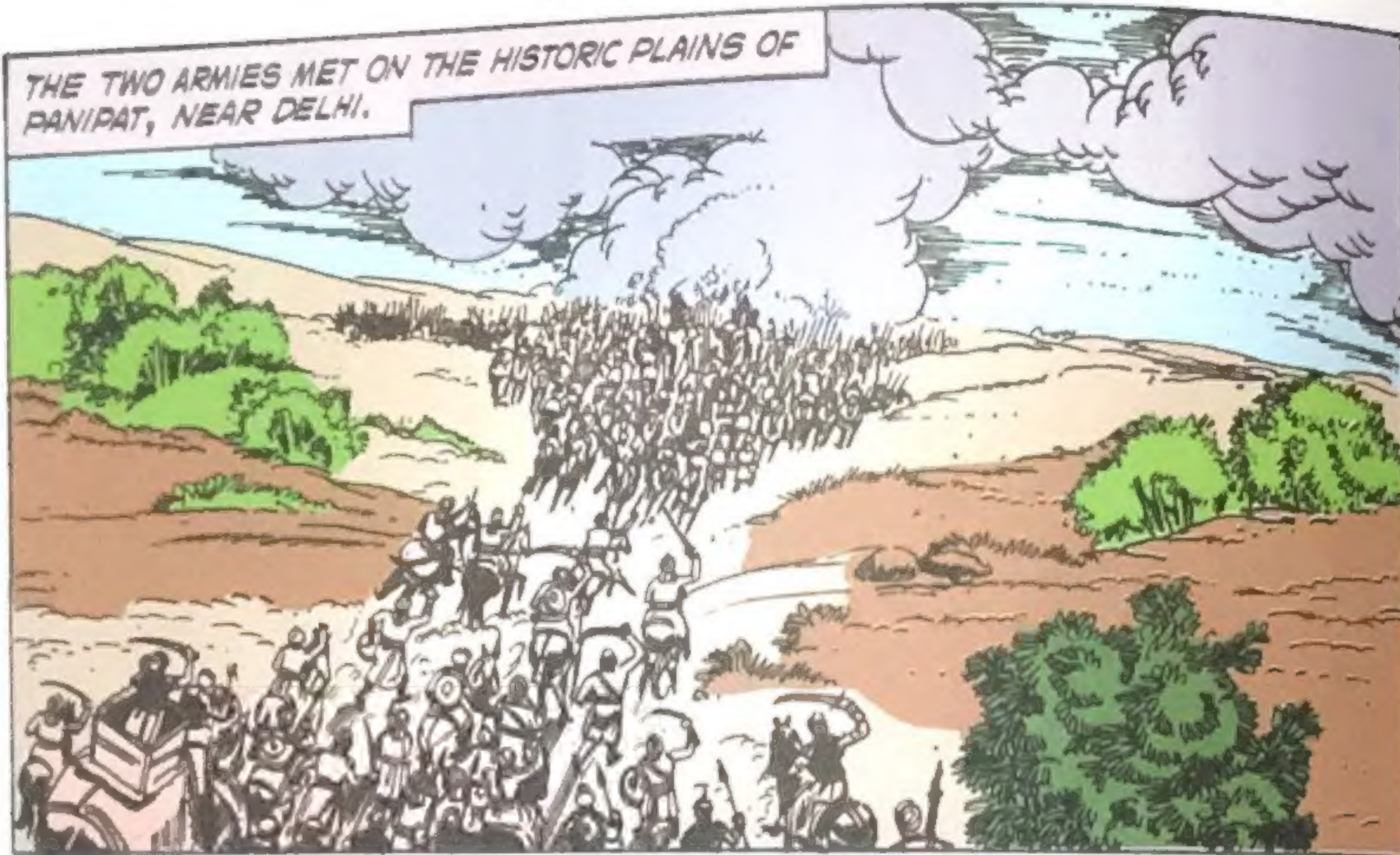


HE WOKE UP SWEATING AND GASPING.

EVERYTHING POINTS TO OUR VICTORY. AND YET I TREMBLE LIKE A FRIGHTENED CHILD!



THE TWO ARMIES MET ON THE HISTORIC PLAINS OF PANIPAT, NEAR DELHI.



JUST AS THE ARMIES WERE ABOUT TO ATTACK, THE LEADING ELEPHANT IN HEMU'S ARMY WAS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

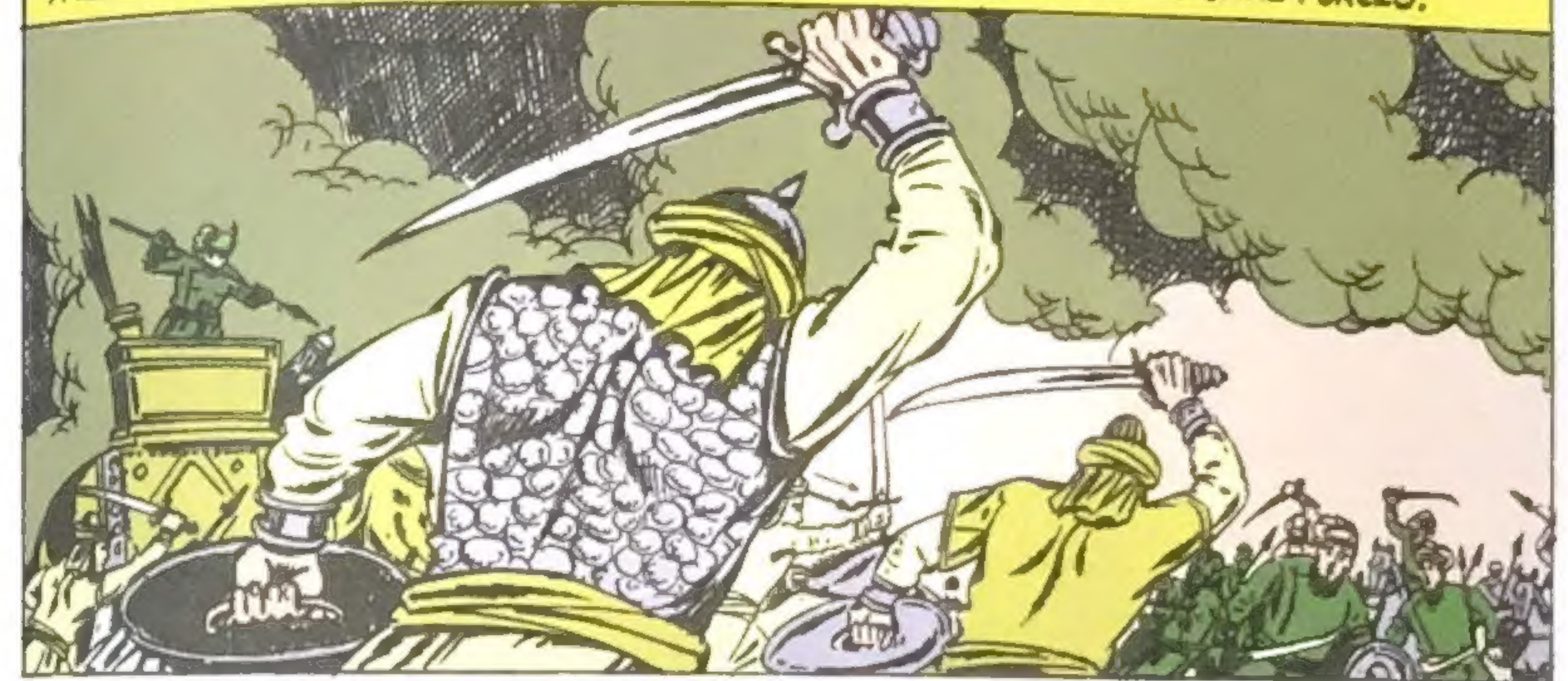


A BAD OMEN. WE SHALL BE DESTROYED!

NO POWER CAN DEFEY OUR WILL. VICTORY GOES TO THOSE WHO FIGHT FOR IT. TAKE COURAGE AND FIGHT!



THE SPIRITED CHARGE OF HEMU AND HIS MEN SCATTERED THE MUGHAL FORCES.



BAIRAM KHAN WAS UNEASY.

ONLY A MIRACLE CAN SAVE US NOW. OR IS THIS THE END OF THE MUGHAL RULE IN INDIA?



JUST THEN A CHANCE ARROW...



...PIERCED HEMU'S EYE. HE SWOONED.

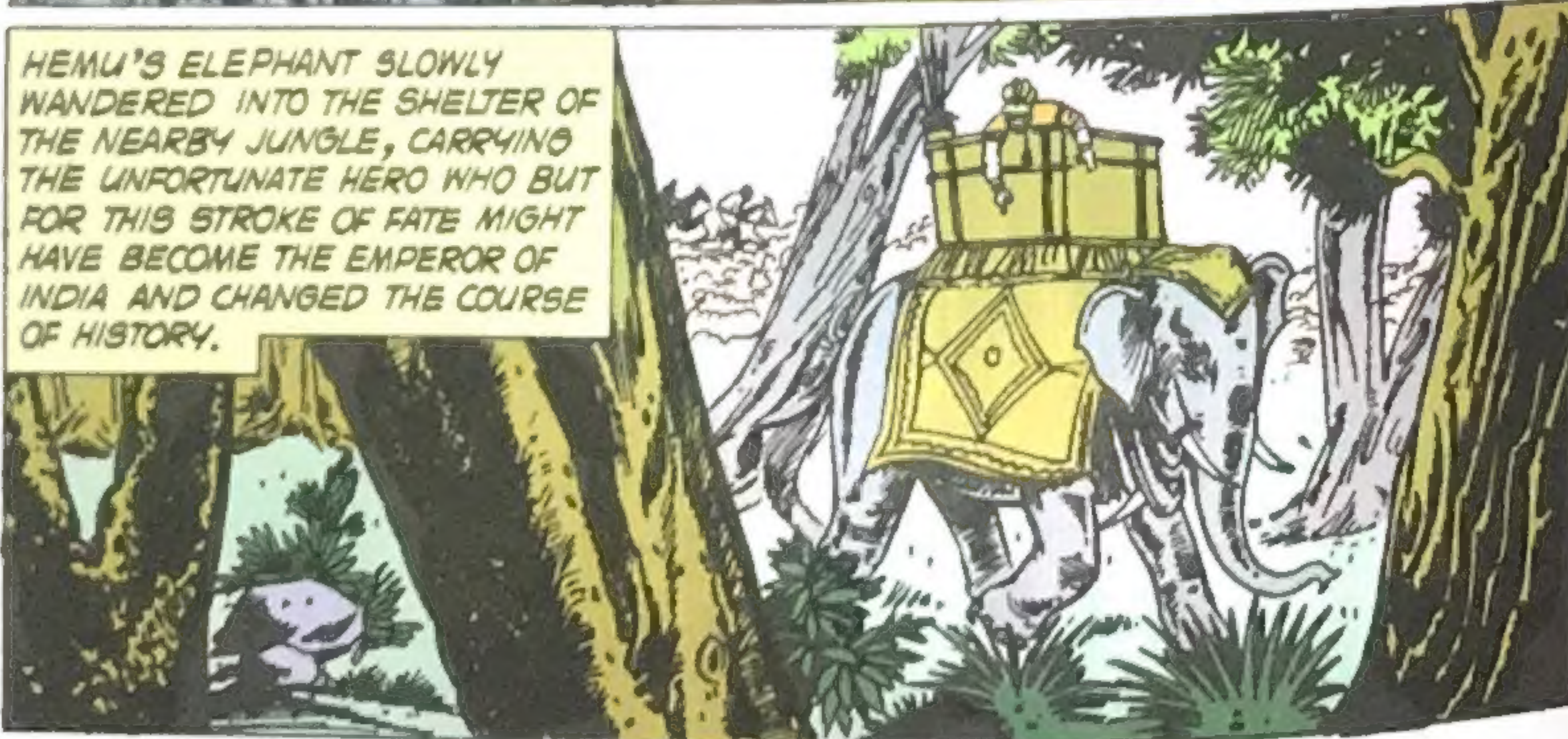




BELIEVING THEIR LEADER TO BE DEAD, HEMU'S FORCES SCATTERED IN PANIC. THAT WHICH WAS CERTAIN VICTORY TURNED INTO DEFEAT.



HEMU'S ELEPHANT SLOWLY WANDERED INTO THE SHELTER OF THE NEARBY JUNGLE, CARRYING THE UNFORTUNATE HERO WHO BUT FOR THIS STROKE OF FATE MIGHT HAVE BECOME THE EMPEROR OF INDIA AND CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY.



राम ब्रह्म व्यापक जगजाना।
परमानंद परेस पुराना॥



Tulsidas' Rām Chārīt Mānās

It brought Ramayana to the masses



Read the story in Amar Chitra Katha